THE

REAL SEEKER:

OR, A

SERIES of LETTERS

RELATIVE TO

HIS RELIGIOUS DOUBTS.

WITH THEIR

Reſpective Solutions and Rejoinders.

LONDON:

Printed for J. WILLIAMS, No. 38, *Fleet-Street*.
M.DCC.LXIX.

44.38.1
C1332.38*



All the numbered Letters are the *Real Seeker*'s, or adopted by him. The first Part ends page 128, the second page 166, and the third page 312.

THE

PREFACE.

I. BEING one day, about two years ſince, on a viſit in the neighbourhood of *H—d—h*, I careleſſly picked up a ſingle ſheet of ſeemingly waſte paper, I ſpied on a chair adjacent to that I ſat on, which, to my no ſmall confuſion, my viſited friend abruptly ſnatched from me. This, we may imagine, made me anxious to know what it could be, as it muſt have been ſomething very extraordinary to apologiſe for ſo rude a treatment. Senſible, from our great intimacy, he did not mean to affront me, nor entertain any ſuſpicion of my Innocence, I, after a few compliments paſſed on both ſides, gave him to underſtand, his not letting me into the ſecret would be giving room to many unfavourable conjectures, the more, as he was not quick enough to hinder my ſeeing the running title of the piece, which is, *The Jew Apologiſt.*

II. Here he was put to a ſtand, wherefore having no ſupterfuge left, and plucking up his ſpirits; inſtead of that uneaſineſs and confuſion he at firſt was ſeized with, he now, to

make, as it ſeemed, virtue of neceſſity, diſcovers a great ſhare of compoſure and modeſty, which I afterwards was inclined, from the merit of the performance, to conſtrue into refined pride: My good friend, ſays he, be aſſured my impoliteneſs, on the occaſion, was owing to the firſt ſallies of ſelf-love, ever prompting us to hide our weak ſide, and that, reſerved as I may appear, I have no concealment from you; however, muſt tell you, I am not a little amazed, you could expect any thing worthy your curioſity or entertainment in a jew-production; but as you ſeem to itch to know what this work is, you muſt underſtand, that, ſince the bill for our naturalization miſcarried, or rather that the act was repealed, we uſed our beſt endeavours to ſhew the unjuſtifiableneſs of ſuch a proceeding; the undertaking was great, but is ſo far brought to bear, as to be juſt now put to preſs; you ſhall have it ſheet by ſheet as it comes out, with only this proviſo, that you keep all to yourſelf until the whole is finiſhed, which I imagine will be towards the end of the year 1766.

III. This is the book that firſt raiſed my ſcruples, ſtaggered my faith, and made me turn *Seeker*; beſides being captivated with the oddity of its oriental ſtile, or, I won't ſay poetry, nor even verſe, but meaſured proſe, and the references to its prior poſitions, in imitation of *Euclid*; I muſt own, though bred a Chriſtian, and not a ſtranger to controverſy, the force of theſe rabinical arguments

guments are ſuch, as I could, left to myſelf, by no means elude; long at a loſs who to unboſom myſelf to, I at length bethought me of the *Public Ledger*, which makes a merit of *being open to all parties, but influenced by none*; I ſoon found this ſpecious profeſſion of impartiality liable to ſuch reſtraints, as rendered this channel of information unfit for my purpoſe: after having inſerted ten of my letters, from the 10th of *May* to the 16th of *Auguſt* 1766, the printer gave me to underſtand they were thought to ſavour ſo ſtrong of ſiniſter views, as made it unſafe for him to publiſh any more; this conduct ſeemed the more ſtrange, as the *Real Freethinker*, whoſe views muſt have been as ſuſpicious as mine to the full, was allowed to proceed in his inquiries till he was pleaſed to give out of his own accord, that as yet I had touched on no topic, that had not already been broached, if not fully handled by one or other of his correſpondents, and eſpecially as I could never expect, even had my motive been as fraudulent as it was ſincere, ſuch Muſſelmen-arguments from any votaries of the freedom of thought.

IV. Diſappointed here, the next trial I made was in the way of conference, which equally proved ineffectual, nor can this be much wondered at, when every one muſt be ſenſible, how frequent it is with the cloſeſt of reaſoners, what with the fallaciouſneſs of their memory, and the many incidental queſtions that occur, to ſwerve from the main point; in ſo much, that in a debate of any

continuance, where they end often appears as far diſtant from where they began, as the heaven is from the earth. The firſt gentleman I made my application to, thoro' the interpoſition of a friend, was a dignitary of the church of *England*, the ſecond a clergyman of ſome eminence in the church of *Rome*; without deſcending to the particulars of what then paſſed, which were next to impoſſible, unleſs taken off in ſhort-hand or otherwiſe, ſo various were the topics, and ſo irregularly (to ſuch a pitch was theſe gentlemens paſſion raiſed) touched upon; after having given me all the ſatisfaction they could, and finding I ſtill raiſed freſh difficulties, the one pronounced me a diſguiſed Jeſuit, the other a caſe-hardened H——k.

V. Having no other reſource left, I therefore, at my own expence, which I am little able, but willing, for the ſake of quieting my conſcience, to bear, here undertake the republication thereof, with but few alterations, whereof one is to refer the reader to the above jewiſh work by means of three figures, ſignifying book, chapter and verſe; and another to theſe letters, by means of two, ſignifying the pages and paragraphs, into which, for the ſake of references, I divide all theſe pieces; but if the firſt figure be a Zero it will ſignify the ſame letter; leaving the world to judge if I have reaſon to be ſatisfied with the ſolutions hitherto given to my doubts.

VI. Nor do I think any offence can reaſonably be taken thereat, conſidering how unqueſtionable

queſtionable our right is to ſeek relief, when diſtreſſed; nor imagine, that a continuation of animadverſions on ſuch religious productions, as tend to ſow or foment diſcord amongſt fellow-ſubjects, which woeful experience ſhews to be but too often the caſe, ſhould give more umbrage, or be leſs conducive to the public weal than the *Critical Review*, as, like this, it may, if not check the career, at leaſt prevent the baneful influence of malevolent pens; nor, infine, that the printer of the *Ledger* can be juſtly diſpleaſed, when I intreat ſuch as are inclined to help me with their leſſons, to make it the vehicle thereof, as I preſume, his inſertion of my ſcruples, by way of ſolution or confutation, can never by any one, unleſs to a great degree biaſſed, be found exceptionable; eſpecially as he has himſelf practiſed this method, in reference to the life of cardinal *Pole*, and recommends it in his remarks upon the obſervations of his correſpondents of the 3d of *May* 1766, as the moſt effectual to the champions of proteſtancy: much leſs has he a right to be diſſatified, ſhould I, for uniformity ſake inſcribe ſome letters to him, without their having been ſo in fact, eſpecially when I declare, barring the above ten, I have never ſent him any. But ſhould people be ſo very touchy as to find fault with the inſertion of my ſcruples, even in this manner, it is to be hoped they will not, when I tell them I ſhall be ſatisfied with their bare reſolves being mentioned, provided the references be duly made: by making uſe of theſe

or other ſuch expreſſions: *the information the* Real Seeker *wants to have* (30. 2.) *is as follow-eth; his objection* (40. 5.) *is anſwered thus; as to the difficulty he makes* (20. 4.) *his miſtake lies in this*, &c. At this rate neither he nor correſpondents can in reaſon be charged with ſpreading the pretended infection of my ſcruples.

THE

THE

REAL SEEKER, &c.

LETTER I.

May 10, 1766.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger.

I. I AM ſorry the indulgence you granted the late religious champions has anſwered no deſireable effect: I ſuſpected as much from ſeeing ſo many ſubjects, and each of no ſmall importance, come upon the carpet at a time, and ſo handled that each diſputant canvaſſed his own without any oppoſition from his antagoniſt, which made them look to me like flouriſhing gladiators before they come to cloſe quarters. It is great pity the fair opportunity your moſt valuable paper affords for repairing the fatal breach made in the chriſtian ſyſtem ſhould not be improved to ſome good purpoſe; its advantages are great, eſpecially to a generation not bigotted to implicit faith, and may poſſibly not fall ſhort of thoſe of general councils, or even a freſh revelation; a maſked champion can only have truth in view; whereas he that appears in his own colours, may be tempted to ſacrifice every conſideration to that of his coming off victorious.

II. The

II. The abrupt manner in which the *Free-thinker* has taken his leave, for having been found fault with for an obnoxious expreſſion, (this word is *perſecution*, which yet I find made uſe of in the 47th injunction, for the firſt viſitation in queen *Elizabeth*'s reign) looks to me as if he had been glad of the opportunity, having fired off all his ammunition; and that from his making little or no defence, his view from the beginning was, inſtead of attributing, as I all along expected, with the Jew Apologiſt, (2. 1. 65.) the growth of Popery to its being of a divine original, to give Proteſtants a bone to pick, by upbraiding them with ſome falſe ſteps taken to propagate the Reformation. I had great hopes of having ſome ſcruples removed from my breaſt through theſe diſquiſitions, without ſetting pen to paper, for which in point of language I am very ill qualified; but their being now all blaſted, I beg the favour you would put me in the way of getting rid of ſuch troubleſome gueſts, either by means of your correſpondents, or, ſhould you find my letters unworthy of publication, your own judicious remarks; obſerving you to be the refuge of great numbers corporally diſtreſſed, I made no doubt but you had bowels enough to take my piteous ſpiritual caſe into conſideration.

III. Bred up from my infancy with a great ſenſe of ſome religion or worſhip of the Deity, I for ſome years paſt have uſed my beſt endeavours, in ſuch a great variety, to ſeek out the moſt rational: the many abſurdities of Paganiſm gave me a diſguſt to Deiſm, or the light borrowed from unaſſiſted reaſon; the long diſgrace and diſappointed hopes of Judaiſm incline me to think it has ſerved its time, and made room for Chriſtianity; but which to embrace, Popery or Proteſtancy, into which this ſacred polity is principally ſplit, perplexes me not a little. I purchaſed a large folio-*preſervative* againſt

againſt Popery, as the moſt probable means, I thought, of coming at the merits of both; the *pro* and the *con* being, for the moſt part, there alike ſtated: but this has much the ſame effect on me as Mr. *Pope* complains of, viz. of making me a Proteſtant and Papiſt by turns, according as the tract happens to be which I read laſt: however not ſo, but that, upon the whole, I think the appearances in favour of Popery, and that, for the reaſons, I am to ſend you, which I call ſcruples, as ſetting my conſcience at variance with my inclination and intereſt.

IV. To begin therefore with the doubts ſuggeſted by the late controverſy, I apprehend it ill behoves Proteſtants, who have pleaded liberty of conſcience for their rupture with *Rome*, to cramp that of Papiſts by preſſing, under ſevere penalties, the teſt or any other oath, that has no tendency to ſecure the loyalty of the ſubject, upon them; as I cannot ſee why they may not be loyal, tho' bigotted to tranſubſtantiation, the invocation of ſaints, &c. and that non-jurors who condemn theſe tenets are the reverſe, I naturally am led to conclude theſe oaths impertinent to loyalty, and that the view in framing and tendering them could be no other than to oblige Papiſts to abjure their religious tenets at the expence of their conſcience; a proceeding ſo inconſiſtent, that the more moderate of the Proteſtants with one voice diſclaim it.

V. The oath of allegiance being the only one calculated for the welfare of the ſtate, is then the only oath I think that can warrantably be exacted. And ſhould it be ſaid, that here the conſcience is alſo cramped by renouncing the doctrine of the pope's depoſing and diſpenſing power; the difference is, that the above tenets were declared to be of faith, whereas this, far from being ſuch, is reckoned by all men of ſenſe, not excepting the pope,

to

to be ſelf-abſurd, whereof we have ſtrong indications in the conduct both of Papiſts and popes for ſome years paſt; but as ſuch facts are ſo liable to miſconſtruction, I only inſiſt upon this doctrine not being dogmatical, whence it muſt follow, that the conſcience ſuffers no conſtraint in renouncing it. Another difference is, that even ſuppoſing this tenet had made part of the Papiſts creed, they ſtill might be forced to renounce it, as being pernicious to government, which is not the caſe with the others.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

For the Public Ledger, *May* 17.

To the Real Freethinker, *and the* Real Seeker, *of Saturday May* 10. (See page 9.)

I. I Should, by no means, think it reaſonable to conclude you a Papiſt, becauſe you have pleaded ſo earneſtly for the toleration of Popery. Nevertheleſs, you will not take offence, at my ſuppoſing your argument defective, and your catholiciſm too perilous to a Proteſtant political ſyſtem. You complain, "that the Roman Catholics are the moſt diſcouraged of any party in this kingdom." It may be ſo: but will you allow me to aſk, what party in the kingdom holds ſuch dangerous principles, ſo adverſe and inimical to our civil and religious liberties? But you again ſay, "the diſtinction between puniſhing Papiſts for their religion, and puniſhing them for religious principles deſtructive to ſociety, is common to all *perſecutions.*" And you alledge the Spaniſh inquiſition, and the perſecutions in France, as pretended to preſerve the peace and conſtitution of thoſe kingdoms, &c.

But,

But, ſir, you well know, that theſe are but mere pretenſions: no better founded than the perſecution of the Chriſtians by *Rome Pagan*, who held no one principle perilous or pernicious to any one civilized conſtitution; whereas Popery has internal, eſſential, avowed principles, ſubverſive of the civil and religious liberties of mankind; and which renders imminently dangerous the condition of any community which it deems *Heretical*. Here, you ſee, the diſtinction of puniſhing Papiſts for their religion is, by no means, common to all perſecutions. In fact, there is no diſtinguiſhing between their religion, and their religious principles deſtructive to ſociety. There is not, unleſs you are able to ſeparate thoſe principles, which they hold deſtructive to ſociety, from their religion.

II. I profeſs myſelf as *real a Freethinker* as any man in the world; and I truſt in God have as great an abhorrence of perſecution, on account of the rights of conſcience. But give me leave to aſk, how you, ſir, or any man in the world, will give a ſatisfactory ſolution to the following queſtions. "Is Popery become a friendly, charitable neighbour to thoſe of the reformed religion? Has ſhe acquitted the Proteſtants of *Hereſy?* And if ſhe has not, is ſhe convinced that *Heretics* ought to be tolerated, and that ſhe ought to keep her faith with them, as truly as with thoſe of her own communion? Has ſhe receded from her claim of *infallibility?* Have not a majority of Engliſh Papiſts of rank and fortune *Jeſuits* in their houſes, who have the direction of their conſciences? Is it not the doctrine of *Jeſuits*, that princes may be excommunicated by the pope? And are not all who hold theſe opinions, enemies to a Proteſtant government?"

III. You ſay, "it is notorious that the Catholics have given proofs of their fidelity and loyalty

to

to Proteſtant princes, notwithſtanding their provocations." I preſume, you will not deny that the rebellions of 1715 and of 1745 had ſomething in them, that was not fully in proof of their fidelity and loyalty. Perhaps, you will ſay, the Papiſts did not all riſe; moſt of them remained quiet. I could ſhew a very political reaſon why they did not.---It was becauſe they durſt not. They were too well watched, and not allowed the opportunity. But the countenance given to thoſe rebellions, will convince any man, who has the leaſt underſtanding, that Popery had in them no very favourable deſigns on a Proteſtant government. Will you, ſir, give any aſſurance, that, when Popery has once ſtrengthened her hands with a ſufficient number of converts, ſhe will not avail herſelf of the firſt opportunity of wreſting out of our hands our ineſtimable rights and liberties, civil and religious?

IV. You ſay, indeed, "Our laws are hoſtile againſt Papiſts, who do not at preſent deſerve the ſcourge." If any more lenient methods can be taken, that will ſecure our conſtitution, let them be: But do not call thoſe *hoſtile* laws, which are only defenſive. You are inclined to brand theſe reſtraining laws with the ſpirit of *perſecution*. Allow me to aſk, whether thoſe laws of the 7 Will. III. ch. 6. and 7. Anne, ch. 21. and 10 Anne, ch. 10. and 12 Anne, ch. 11. which make it *high-treaſon* for any ſubject of the crown of Great-Britain, either within or without the kingdom, to enliſt himſelf, or procure any ſubject to enliſt himſelf with intent to ſerve any foreign prince, ſtate, &c. I ſay, will theſe laws of this tenour, deſerve the brand of hoſtile, or perſecuting penal laws? If they cannot be juſtly ſo deemed, then I thus argue, that a profeſſion, called religious, in which men are ſet at liberty and abſolved from their allegiance to their lawful prince, by the homage given to a foreign

foreign power, puts every ſuch ſubject of the crown of Great Britain into the ſame predicament; and he is, by a parity of reaſon, guilty of high treaſon in the open profeſſion.

V. There is no need at all to lay any falſe charges upon Popery. They who are in the leaſt acquainted with the open avowed principles of the profeſſion, may find arguments ſufficient to expoſe the very formidable deluſion: for although this political worldly ſyſtem, has adviſed its votaries to avoid all offenſive appearances in the general run of later years, and has entered into very pacific terms with our public adminiſtrations, yet this will be no manner of proof, that Popery has thrown off all her malignity to the Proteſtant profeſſion.

VI. That maſterly reaſoner Mr. *Locke* has acknowledged, that toleration ſhould extend to an idolatrous church, and to Pagans living in a Chriſtian country; for tho' idolatry be ſinful, the civil magiſtrate has no right to puniſh, farther than injuries done to one's neighbour or the common-wealth. Idolatry was only a puniſhable crime in the Jewiſh common-wealth, which was an abſolute theocracy. But then, this moſt able advocate for toleration, in its utmoſt extent, ſhews, "that that church can have no right to be tolerated by the civil magiſtrate, which is conſtituted upon ſuch a bottom, that all who enter into it, do thereby, *ipſo facto*, deliver themſelves up to the protection and ſervice of another prince; for, by this means, the magiſtrate would give way to the ſetting up of a foreign juriſdiction in his own country, and ſuffer his own people to be liſted, as it were, for ſoldiers againſt his own government. Nor does the frivolous and fallacious diſtinction between the court and the church afford any remedy to this inconvenience; eſpecially when both the one and the other are equally ſubject to the abſolute authority of the

ſame

ſame perſon; who has not only power to perſuade the members of his church to whatſoever he liſts, either as purely religious, or in order thereunto, but can alſo enjoin it on them on pain of eternal fire."

VII. This citation is made from his *firſt letter on toleration*, and is ſo full and deciſive an argument, that nothing has ever yet appeared, as a confutation. Is there in this any thing inhuman, any thing that can fruſtrate or undermine the ſacred feelings of a compaſſionate heart? If there be, I am ſo unhappy as not to be aware of it. Or, does it appear that the circumſtances of the preſent times are ſo very different from thoſe wherein theſe penal laws were made, as to ſuppoſe the execution of them ſubverſive of the very foundation of the Reformation? Should this be the caſe, the execution of them ſhould, by no means be countenanced. All, in one word, I would plead for is, that no wiſe and reaſonable meaſures may be omitted to hinder a profeſſion (which religiouſly ſacrifices the rights of private judgment) from ſpreading its malignant influence on a people, that has only been ſo highly diſtinguiſhed as a free nation, by virtue of thoſe ſucceſsful efforts they have made, to throw off from them the enſlaving fetters of Popery.

ANTI-PAPISTA.

LETTER II.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *May* 31.

I. THE moſt material objection I find made to the above (11.5.) papal power not being a dogm is, that Papiſts are as tenacious of it, as if it

it had been one, and that their now-pretended moderation, whereof they would give a ſample in their offering to take the oath of allegiance upon being allowed a toleration, is making virtue of neceſſity, diſſembling their dark deſigns until they have got a fair opportunity of throwing off the maſk with ſafety, when they will effectually ſhew, they pay as little regard to promiſes made to Proteſtants, as the council of *Conſtance* has to the ſafe conduct granted to *John Huſs*, or *Paul* the Fifth, to the oath of allegiance taken to *James* the Firſt: for altho' in the common occurrences of life their words may be depended upon, yet not ſo, when claſhing with the intereſt of religion, and the pope's injunctions, for the ſake of bringing down Proteſtants.

II. I ſhall not take upon me to fathom the hearts of modern Papiſts, nor abſolutely deny, they may be ſo giddy-headed as to give room to this impeachment; it is poſſible a ſet of religious men, ſober in appearance, may be no better than ſo many perfidious deſperados; but what proof is there given of ſo heavy a charge? None, that I can find, but the maſſacres and rebellions their fore-fathers were engaged in, contrary to their ſworn allegiance, which is, in fact, as if we ſhould charge ſome now very civilized and poliſhed nations, ſprung from *Goths*, *Hunns*, *Vandals*, *Danes* and *Normans*, with the barbarities of their anceſtors, or the now peaceable Baptiſts with the outrages committed by *Muncer* and *Stork*.

III. Now it ſeems incumbent on proteſtants to ſhew, by way of difference, that papiſts of old were actuated in theſe lawleſs ſteps by their great attachment to this papal power, which was ſo ingrafted in their natures, as invariably to run in the blood of all their deſcendants; and then I ſhall be at a loſs, how oaths could have been framed for

people of ſuch a caſt, and they themſelves ſilly enough to have boggled at any, having the antidote ready to diſpel their binding quality: unleſs this be done to ſatisfaction, I ſhall be inclined to aſcribe them to provocations given them by proteſtants, what *Brooke* makes out from original records to have been the caſe with the *Iriſh*. (See 2. 11. 88.)

IV. Nor do I find the very popes ſo intoxicated with this power, as not to be long ſince undeceived: people's veneration for them was ſuch, that they acquieſced in the diſpoſal they made even of crowns; but they ſoon found at their expence, this was but a piece of courteſy, not a right they could claim: they ſoon ſaw it is the buſineſs of a nation, or its repreſentatives, not theirs, to annex conditions to the crown, without which no one could poſſeſs it; ſuch as, for inſtance, that he and even conſort ſhould be proteſtants. They have long ſince repented not to have confined themſelves to their own province of feeding the ſheep with ſound doctrine, to have meddled with the temporalities of princes, and been ſo laviſh of their vatican bolts. (See 3. 2. 38.)

V. But ſhould I put matters at worſt, and allow both papiſts and popes infatuated with this pretended power, how could the miſchiefs apprehended from their machinations be better guarded againſt than by the oath of allegiance? and indeed it ſeems to me, that, after being contented, for conſcience ſake, with the ſimple declaration of a quaker, people ſhould be ſo with the ſimple oath of allegiance of a papiſt; and if there was no ſuch clauſe tacked to the act paſſed for the naturalizing Jews, as that they ſhould renounce their Talmud, or look upon Chriſt as their Meſſiah, I cannot ſee why terms inconſiſtent with the papiſts'

creed,

creed, could warrantably be required at their hands.

VI. From all which I conclude, that it is ſtriking at the root of all ſociety, not to give credit to the oaths of ſuch as are not clearly made out to be liars by profeſſion; or, which comes to the ſame thing, upon principle; and that the oath of allegiance is the only one that can juſtifiably be tendered papiſts by a proteſtant ſtate, being the only one that is calculated for its ſecurity, and that does not cramp them in the belief of their religious tenets.

VII. That of the ſupremacy, I know, is likewiſe excepted; but, beſides its being a check upon religious liberty, I cannot ſee why the Regal and Papal juriſdictions may not have their boundaries; ſo as, that, far from being detrimental, they may, even in different hands, be auxiliary to each other, being as compatible in their own natures as theſe, however different offices, the pantry and ſtudy, or the banquetting houſe and academy.

VIII. As to what ſome object, that religious liberty may as well be clogged here as in popiſh countries; it were the ſame as to ſay, that in the golden age, when all was common, kind nature miniſtering even to the luxury of men, there might have been diſputes about property, the ſame as now; the principle in popiſh countries is conſtraint, but liberty here, eſpecially as to what has no tendency to the corruption of morals or ſubverſion of Government, what therefore is incoherent here, may not be ſo there. (See 2. 4. 34.)

IX. Quere. If it ſhould not ſuffice to make Papiſts ſwear to ſacrifice their lives and fortunes in defence of the king on the throne, without expreſsly renouncing this papal power: as they may pretend, they cannot charge their conſcience with what they know nothing about; and that, as it ſhould ſeem,

this is all that is exacted of ſubjects in right of conqueſt? nor can it be ſaid, the one cramps the conſcience as much as the other; for, may the diſſenter with a ſafe conſcience not ſwear to pay the parſon his tithes; tho' not that they are his due? now if this is all that is neceſſary to ſecure them to him, why ſhould it not be ſo for the ſecurity of the crown?

X. To conclude this letter, I would only aſk, if there be any poſſible means of knowing, if a Papiſt, as a Papiſt, (ſuch I preſume he ceaſes to be upon taking the oath of ſupremacy or the teſt) be well affected to a Proteſtant eſtabliſhment? If not, the oaths then are calculated for making him a Proteſtant; if ſo, I fancy, few or none would find fault with their being propoſed, as I am apt to believe, that liberty of conſcience is the only reaſon they have even to wiſh for a change.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

P. S. This letter would have been inſerted the 17th or 24th, had the printer not been ſtinted for room.

LETTER. III.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *June* 14.

I. THOUGH I might, after the example of the *Free-thinker*, in the poſtſcript to his fifth letter, proceed with the enumeration of my ſcruples, and ſuperciliouſly overlook what the gentleman, who ſtiles himſelf *Anti-papiſta* has publiſhed on the 17th ult. (12. I.) on pretence of his not having ſolved my doubts relative to the dogmatical orthodoxy of the depoſing and diſpenſing papal powers, and the neceſſity of other oaths than that of allegiance for the ſecurity of government; yet, as he is the firſt that has taken my caſe into conſideration,

deration, I thought I could do no leſs than ſtop a little, to give him an account of the effect his production has had on me; eſpecially as I apprehend, the moſt effectual way of bringing our ſchemes to bear, is to level the obſtacles thereto as we go on.

II. Now as he puts the penal laws to the iſſue of the following queries, (12. II.) it is proper I ſhould give him my notion of the Papiſts' ſolution of them, which, if juſt, muſt, I fancy, render ſaid laws unjuſtifiable. 1. Is Popery become a friendly, charitable neighbour of thoſe of the reformed religion? 2. Has ſhe acquitted the Proteſtants of Hereſy? 3. If not, is ſhe convinced that Hereticks ought to be tolerated, and that ſhe ought to keep her faith with them as truly as with thoſe of her own communion? 4. Has ſhe receded from her claim of infallibility? 5. Have not a majority of *Engliſh* Papiſts of rank and fortune Jeſuits for their directors? 6. Is it not the doctrine of Jeſuits that princes may be excommunicated by the pope? 7. Are not all who hold theſe opinions enemies to a Proteſtant government?

III. To the firſt they anſwer in the affirmative, for any dogma, or invariably inherent principle or quality of that ſyſtem to the contrary; nay were her caſe proved to be otherwiſe, the oath of allegiance ſhould be alone ſufficient to prevent thoſe laws taking place. To the ſecond, they ſay, this can not be expected, unleſs ſhe took the charge upon herſelf. To the third they anſwer as to the firſt. To the fourth, if meant of the pope's infallibility, they ſay it never was defined as of faith, and much leſs ſo far as related to the aforeſaid pretended papal powers, (11. V.) the only ones that could endanger a ſtate; that of defining the real preſence, &c. we have ſeen (11. IV.) does not. If underſtood of that of the church, the moſt rational of the Proteſtants, ſay they, hold her ſo far infallible, as that

there always was and ever will be ſomewhere or other an untainted viſible church. To the fifth, it may be ſo for aught they know. To the ſixth, ditto; but is it theirs only? Was it not that of the parliament of *Paris*, in an arret of 1455? Is it the ſame with the depoſing doctrine? Or ſhould this be a rule of faith, even were it that of the Jeſuits? To the ſeventh they anſwer in the negative, unleſs ſuch opinions ſhould chance to claſh with the welfare of government, in which caſe the authors thereof and followers ſhould be alone made to feel the ſeverity of thoſe laws.

IV. I might enlarge upon theſe ſolutions, but that I haſten to other matters, and that I reſolve to be as conciſe as may be in my letters: ſuffice it then at preſent to add, in contraſt to theſe, the following ſingle query, on behalf of Papiſts. Is it conſiſtent with chriſtian charity, or that innate principle of doing as we would be done by, to pretend, that an indelibly inbred rancour lies latent at the bottom of the peaceable comportment of Papiſts, and that without the ſhadow of but a tolerable proof; whilſt this may be, at leaſt equally as well aſcribed to the times not being ſo boiſterouſly vexatious, or, at worſt to their eyes being now ſufficiently open, to ſee the extravagancy of their forefathers' zeal?

V. Before I diſmiſs this ſubject, it is proper to obſerve, that Proteſtants ſeem to think, that all the injunctions of popes are as binding as ſo many dogmas, and muſt be looked upon in that light by Papiſts, which is an egregious miſtake, as appears by numberleſs examples, particularly by the interdict of Venice, and debates about the pragmatick ſanction, which ended in the concordate.

VI. However inconſiſtent I reckon theſe oaths and the penal laws conſequent upon popiſh recuſancy, yet I cannot think with the *Freethinker*, that they

they rationally account for the growth of popery in and about this metropolis; for, ſuppoſing the increaſe of its votaries, which by the by is, I fancy, far from being true, not only in regard to the landed folks, but, conſidering that the idol of the times is ſelf-intereſt, (See 4. 1. 105.) even ſuch of the induſtrious as a non-conformity might prove conſiderably prejudicial to, by the loſs of cuſtomers or otherwiſe, to be indiſputable; I ſcarce believe the argument from hence could have influenced their converſion; for being given to underſtand by the artful prieſt that theſe laws betray a miſtruſt of the reaſonableneſs and truth of Proteſtancy, they muſt have been ideots not to have retorted this upon the inquiſitorial laws; and being told as yet, by way of difference, that Popery grows under the penal laws, which is not the caſe with proteſtancy under the inquiſition: what could be more obvious than to have replied, that this is owing to more lenity being uſed on the one ſide than on the other, confiſcations and excluſions not being apt to ſtrike ſuch terror as *auto-de-fes?* That it is not ſo plain, without any miſmanagement on either ſide, falſhood and impoſture, even againſt odds, could not be an overmatch for truth, as vice under diſadvantages is oftentimes ſuch for virtue? and much leſs, if put on a par with it; as it ſhould ſeem, it was in ſuch an equilibrium the moſt crying errors of idolatry and polytheiſm have once ſo univerſally prevailed, that lord Bolinbroke reckoned the latter the natural religion of mankind?

VII. The argument, it is true, might be of force againſt ſuch a ſcheme as Mahomet's, who made uſe of no other conviction but his bare word, enforced by the ſword; but to ſay, after what the Engliſh divines have wrote in favour of Proteſtancy, that the penal laws create a prejudice

thereto, is what no reaſon ſupports, as they may as well be auxiliaries as deſtructive to argument; (See 1. 11. 12.) and indeed all the advantage I find theſe laws can be of to Popery is, to raiſe people's curioſity, to look into the merits thereof, which has been my own caſe, ſo far, that the *preſervative* I mentioned before, (10. III.) made on me the contrary impreſſions of what it had been intended for.

VIII. And ſure, were the annexing of a penalty to the infringement of a law a diſcount upon the juſtice or reaſonableneſs thereof, I don't ſee why it ſhould not afford the faireſt of pleas to the Deiſt againſt the Moſaick diſpenſation; where, beſides other numberleſs penal ſtatutes, they that worſhipped any other than Jehovah (Deut. xvii. 5.) or induced others thereto (Deut. xiii. 10.) were ordered to be ſtoned to death: nay, the very goſpel were liable to the impeachment, where, in a parabolical way, eternal flames are made an inducement to the practice of virtue (Mat. xxv. 41.) But what above all expoſes the weakneſs of this gentleman's argument is, that he would make a known ſecret impulſe to refractorineſs in men; which gave riſe to the proverbial remark, *nitimur in vetitum*, an article of his indictment, or charge of imprudence againſt all penalties: as it is plain, this kind of reaſoning would ſet them free from all laws whatſoever.

IX. Although I think miſrepreſentation beneath all men of candour, yet I cannot ſee the falſe light proteſtants often put popery in, whilſt they paint proteſtancy in ſuch fair, but perhaps fallacious colours, could contribute towards its making this progreſs; for who could pretend to conclude any thing in its favour from hence? Muſt Satan be an angel of light becauſe ſome people would make him blacker than he is? And ſurely ſuch conſequences as theſe muſt be ſhockingly far-fetched:

the

the hiſtory of pope Joan is fabulous, tranſubſtantiation muſt therefore be true. Proteſtants would make the Pope to be Anti-chriſt, but have miſtaken the date of his fall; therefore they muſt have been out in the points they meant to reform in the papiſts' creed. Luther has given the Landgrave of Heſſe leave to have two wives at a time: therefore the reform he broached could be good in no point, &c. I ſhould be rather inclined to attribute the growth of popery to a *je ne ſçay quoy*, with the *Jew Apologiſt* (2. 2. 4.) or to its being from above, by the argument of the reputable doctor Gamaliel (Acts v. 39.) or, infine, to the reaſons aſſigned by one of his Antagoniſts, *no Smotherer*, of April 19, 1766, and others, his brethren, than to ſuch groundleſs cauſes. If this gentleman imagines, by ſuch arguments, to plead the cauſe of Popery to any good purpoſe, I fancy he is miſtaken; what could it concern that religion even ſhould it be clearly made out, for inſtance, that the maſſacres of Paris and Ireland are not exaggerated? and even that its votaries were the unprovoked aggreſſors therein, unleſs it appeared it held ſome tenets encouraging the ſame? what were it to the maſter ſhould his ſervant go upon the highway without his privity? The ſuppoſed exorbitancy of popiſh tenets, and not ſuch precarious facts, ſhould then have been the object of his reſearches, leaving the vindication of perſonal conduct to ſuch as it may concern, groveling petty-foggers, not ſoaring divines; however, therefore, he may value himſelf upon being of the free-thinking kind, I am fully convinced he can never paſs with the truly judicious for having made any tolerable figure here, in the rational argumentative way.

X. As to the truth of thoſe articles, and firſt that of pope Joan, I refer the reader to the *Jew Apologiſt*

Apologiſt (3. 3. 46.) in relation to the poligamy, I only need ſay, ſuppoſing the licence granted, that Luther might have countenanced it as a leſſer evil, as otherwiſe that prince might have ſlackened in his zeal for the goſpel, which is no more than what Moſes did, in granting bills of divorce, a condeſcenſion, it were perhaps to be wiſhed for Engliſh papiſts, the pope had uſed towards Harry the Eighth (See 3. 3. 51.) and as to the pope being Anti-chriſt, the only way of clearing this point is, to ſee if he anſwers the characters given this monſter in ſcripture, which for the purpoſe ſhould be verified in him and him alone. (See 2. 12. 56.) where we ſhall find that the projectors and foſterers of this papal epithet muſt have been groſsly ignorant, or to the laſt degree diſingenuous.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, *June* 21.

I. WE may lodge our appeal with the impartial public to determine, who they are that are for plaguing Papiſts and bringing them into trouble. Have not they themſelves forced the public upon the preſent ſtricter ſcrutiny after them, by their abuſe of the mildeſt of governments, in not being content with the full eaſe and indulgence allowed them; but, under cloak of that, continually ſtriving to pervert his majeſty's ſubjects, by various methods, ſecret and open, complained of by biſhop *Sherlock*, the preſent lord archbiſhop of *Canterbury*, and many others, for theſe thirty years paſt.

II. And ſtill, not content with this liberty, too much winked at and overlooked, their boldneſs has

has increaſed, as might well be preſumed, with their numbers; and their advocates, in your's and other public prints, inſiſt upon a free and full toleration of Papiſts, and admiſſion to all the rights of ſociety, the ſame that is granted to other religioniſts, and having reckoned upon, and made ſure of carrying their point, as ſome of their indiſcreeter brethren have babbled out, they are mightily enraged with thoſe who have fairly called in queſtion the merits of their plea, before it was admitted.

III. But with an ill grace do they plead for the innocency of religious error, whoſe principle and invariable practice have been to puniſh hereticks, that is, all men under religious error, with death. However, this inconſiſtency would be paſſed over, had they any thing ſolid or convincing to advance in their own behalf. But all we have ſeen, are no more than the precarious aſſertions of one or two obſcure men, contradicted in the mean while by their own avowed unforſaken principles and practices; for the edicts of popes, and the decrees of general councils againſt hereticks, often quoted in the preſent controverſy, ſtill continue in force, being in no degree repealed; and to theſe they owe and pay, and are bound to pay, an unreſerved obedience.

IV. In *Spain* and *Portugal*, no Proteſtant Natives of the country are ſuffered to live. In *Italy*, particularly under the king of *Sardinia*, the poor remains of the ancient *Vaudois* are treated with uncommon barbarity. It is merely through policy, and of late only, if the empreſs queen ſhews any mercy to her *Hungarian* ſubjects. For a century paſt they have been hunted down like wolves, and deſtroyed by the Jeſuits. And ſo lately as the year 1752, we had publiſhed a particular account

of

of the cruelties exerciſed upon the Proteſtants in *France*. Very far ſhould I be from wiſhing the ſame meaſure to be dealt to Papiſts which they deal to others. May Proteſtants never more ſtain their name with practices ſo contrary to their principles! But this is only briefly intimated, to ſhew the practice of Papiſts, their principle is known. Could theſe objections to the free toleration of Papiſts in this country be removed, which they cannot, whilſt they continue to own the ſupremacy of the pope over them, there is another inſuperable objection ſtill behind.

V. All Papiſts educated abroad, and the greateſt part of them are there educated, are bred up univerſally in an attachment to the unfortunate houſe of *Stuart*, as they call it; and whom they are taught to look upon as martyrs to their religion. This we have long believed and known. But we have had a late very alarming confirmation of it, in a letter from *Paris*, printed the laſt month in this Paper and *London Chronicle*.

VI. Theſe objections, however, are trifles with the *Real Seeker* in the *Ledger* of *May* 31. (19. VII.) He is quite ſanguine for the papal juriſdiction taking place immediately among us, and a *Nuncio* to be ſent over to *St. James*'s without delay. "I cannot ſee, ſays he, why the regal and papal juriſdictions may not have their boundaries; ſo as that, far from being detrimental, they may even in different hands, be auxiliary to each other." But give me the papal juriſdiction, the engine of auricular confeſſion, the power over conſciences, and I will ſoon make the regal power to bow the knee to me. The two powers, ſpiritual and temporal, may indeed, as he ſays, divide their empire more peaceably, and be auxiliary to each other; but the people ſtill, which all church-hiſtory confirms, muſt be fettered ſlaves, both in body and mind.

mind. And this in truth, it muſt be owned, is the charm with wi. h the emiſſaries of *Rome* flatter the minds of weak princes, often to their ruin.

VII. Says *counſellor Candour*, Mr. *Brooke*, whom they are often quoting, " The Papiſts [*Iriſh*] are " the moſt loyal and amenable ſubjects under the " ſun." *Amenable* is a pretty word, he is very fond of, though ſomewhat marred by what we have been lately told of the *White Boys*. " Their prieſts are to them in the place of let- " ters of inſtruction, of parents, of governors, of " their church, and of their God. They take " hold of the ſouls of infants, as you would of " ſprouting twigs, and bend them, during their " ſtate of pliancy, to the deſired direction. They " preſerve their authority, not only with the threats " of future, but by the infliction of preſent pu- " niſhments."

VIII. With all good princes, who wiſh to rule over men, and not brutes without underſtanding, and with all lovers of truth and of mankind, this fine-wrought recommendation of Popery, will be, I preſume, an everlaſting argument againſt it; and prompt all our endeavours to prevent the ſpreading of the prieſtly powers, ſo boaſted of, to reſcue our poor fellow-ſubjects of *Ireland* out of ſo unmanly and abject a ſtate, and to ſave ourſelves from falling into it.

I am, ſir,

Your humble ſervant,

No Smotherer.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, *June* 28.

I. *ANTI-papiſta*, in your *Ledger* of *May* 17th (13. II.) aſks, 1ſt. Is Popery become a friendly, charitable neighbour of thoſe of the reformed religion? The *Real Seeker*, in your *Ledger* of the 14th inſtant, (21. III.) anſwers on the behalf of the Roman Catholics, in the affirmative, "for any dogma, or invariably inherent principle or quality of that ſyſtem to the contrary." But this anſwer is inſufficient and fallacious. The queſtion implies, that Popery has been, at *ſome* period, an *unfriendly* and an *uncharitable* neighbour to thoſe of the reformed religion. And the true anſwer ſhould have been; either that Popery never was unfriendly or uncharitable to the reformed religion, or that the dogmata, or principles on which her former enmity and uncharitableneſs were built, were not ſimply *variable*, but actually have been varied, in conſequence of their *never* having been conſidered as inherent principles of Popery. Theſe are queſtions of fact; and determinable by the cleareſt evidence; and till they are determined, the oath of allegiance will be no ſecurity either to a Proteſtant king or his Proteſtant ſubjects, becauſe, for aught that appears to the contrary, the Papiſt will take it, againſt the inherent principles of his religion.

II. *Anti-papiſta* aſks, 2dly. Has ſhe acquitted the Proteſtants of Hereſy? The *Real Seeker* anſwers, "this cannot be expected, unleſs ſhe took the charge upon herſelf." Here again the anſwer is evaſive and unſatisfactory; for the *Real Seeker* could hardly be ignorant that the queſtion goes upon the ſuppoſition, that the invariable dogma, and inherent principle of popery concerning Hereſy is, tha[illegible]ll Heretics are

in

in a ſtate of everlaſting damnation; a dogma which is both unfriendly and uncharitable to thoſe who are under the imputation of Hereſy, as all Proteſtants are in the eſtimation of Popery.

III. *Anti-papiſta* queries, 3dly. If not, is Popery convinced that Heretics ought to be tolerated? and that ſhe ought to keep her faith with them, as truly as with thoſe of her own communion? The *Real Seeker* ſays, the Papiſts anſwer to this query as to the firſt, viz. that Popery is convinced that Heretics ought to be tolerated; and that faith ought to be kept with them as truly as with thoſe of her own communion; and that ſhe hath no invariable dogma, or inherent principle to the contrary. Theſe two dogmata, however, being inferences from the principle, that all Proteſtants conſidered as Heretics are in a ſtate of damnation, the *Real Seeker*'s anſwer to this query is juſt as lame as the reſt, till he has proved that theſe dogmata have varied, and are not inherent principles of the Popiſh ſyſtem. And with reſpect to ſuch proof, I apprehend he muſt be under conſiderable difficulties, as Proteſtants are not, *in fact*, tolerated in any ſtate where Popery is the eſtabliſhed religion; and as the dogma, that no faith is to be kept with Heretics, was the ſolemn deciſion of the council of *Conſtance*, and continued ſo for near 300 years, viz. from the year 1415, to the year 1707, when the pope avowed it in a letter to king *Auguſtus*, after the treaty of *Altranſtadt*. And that it has been *ſince* diſavowed, will be the *Real Seeker*'s buſineſs to ſhew.

IV. *Anti-papiſta* aſks again, 4thly. Has Popery receded from her claim of infallibility? The *Real Seeker* anſwers, "that the pope's infallibility was never defined as of faith, much leſs ſo far as related to the aforeſaid pretended papal powers, the only that could endanger the ſtate."

ſtate." His meaning here is a little obſcure; but that is not material. The queſtion is not what is *defined* as of faith, but what is *held* as of faith, by the generality of thoſe who profeſs Popery in *England*. And to this latter point he ought to ſpeak explicitly, if he would inſure the ſtate from the danger of popiſh tenets. "If underſtood, ſays the *Real Seeker*, of the infallibility of the church, the moſt rational of the Proteſtants ſay, they hold her ſo far infallible, as that there always was, and ever will be, *ſomewhere*, an untainted *viſible* church." But can they be called *moſt rational*, who hold an hypotheſis contrary to matter of fact? If ſuch an untainted viſible church there really is, ſurely thoſe *moſt rational* men can point out the *ſomewhere* of her exiſtence. In the mean time, we ſuſpect theſe *moſt rational* Proteſtants to be the mongrels of the Nonjuring Jacobitical churches, of whom the conſiſtent Proteſtant ſubjects of a free Proteſtant government have little leſs reaſon to be jealous than of Papiſts themſelves.

V. *Anti-papiſta*'s 5th Query is, Have not a majority of *Engliſh* Papiſts Jeſuits for their directors? The Papiſts anſwer, by the pen of the *Real Seeker*, "It may be ſo, for aught they know." The importance of this conceſſion will appear by and by.

VI. *Anti-papiſta* aſks, 6thly. is it not the doctrine of the Jeſuits, that princes may be excommunicated by the pope? To this the *Real Seeker* anſwers, "Ditto, *i. e.* The Jeſuits may hold this "doctrine for aught the Papiſts know. Nay, ſhould "the Jeſuits inveſt popes with even the above "powers, their doctrine makes no rule of faith." Perhaps not in *France* and *Portugal*, from whence the Jeſuits have been expelled, and where their doctrines are reprobated. But we are not now enquiring into the equity of the penal laws of thoſe countries,

countries, but whether they are equitable in our own country. Now as the moſt conſiderable body of papiſts of this kingdom are, according to the conceſſion above-mentioned (o. V.) under the direction of Jeſuits, that body of Papiſts muſt take the doctrine of the Jeſuits, for their rule of faith, whatever others do who are not under the direction of Jeſuits. Be it remembered, however, that all papiſts refuſe to give the government that ſecurity, by which only it can be known, that this doctrine of the Jeſuits is *not* their rule of faith. And on this head I could bring the remarkable opinion of a papiſt of a good family and opulent fortune, who, with a numerous body of popiſh ſervants and tenants in his dependance, is under the direction of a prieſt, who is not only not a Jeſuit, but expreſſes a mortal averſion to that order.

VII. *Anti-papiſta* aſks, 7thly, Are not all who hold theſe opinions, enemies to a proteſtant government? The *Real Seeker* anſwers for the papiſts in the negative, "Unleſs, ſays he, ſuch opinions ſhould chance "to claſh with the welfare of government; in which "caſe the authors thereof and followers, ſhould "alone be made to feel the ſeverity of thoſe laws." Very well. The opinions of the Jeſuits have been found to claſh with the welfare of the French and Portugueze governments; they have accordingly been expelled thoſe kingdoms, and, by proceſſes againſt them, we perceive, that their opinions claſh ten times more with the ſafety and welfare of our proteſtant government. The ſame Jeſuits reſort to England, and become directors of the conſciences of the generality of Engliſh papiſts. Conſequently the opinions of theſe Jeſuits do *not* claſh with the opinions of the generality of Engliſh papiſts. Conſequently the opinions of the generality of Engliſh papiſts *do* claſh with the ſafety and welfare of our proteſtant government. Con-

 ſequently

ſequently the Jeſuits and their followers, who are the generality of the papiſts in England, do JUSTLY feel the ſeverity of thoſe penal laws, which our wiſe anceſtors enacted for our ſecurity, againſt the pernicious principles and maxims of popery. Thus is the whole elaborate ſyſtem of our *Real Seeker* fairly overthrown, by the application of his own principles and conceſſions, and the help of a few facts, of *public notoriety*, as one of his brethren has it. When he attempts to build again, I would adviſe him to temper his mortar a little better.

I am, ſir, &c.

A Lover of Sincerity

LETTER IV.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *July 5.*

I. I Never could have thought, Mr. printer, that (as in our long-winded law affairs) it is much eaſier to embark in, than get rid of polemical diſputes; what I would have done, had I foreſeen this, is uncertain, but anonymous writers running no riſque as to their honour, you may gueſs it is conſcience alone could engage me in the purſuit. When I thought, from the ſilence of your correſpondents, that what I have been driving at hitherto was given up to me; and that I had no more to do than go on to try the fate of my other ſcruples; behold I am ſtopt ſhort by the letters of two gentlemen, the one ſtiling himſelf *No ſmotherer*, the other a *Lover of ſincerity*, in alluſion, I ſuppoſe, to their antagoniſts, whom they would brand with the oppoſite epithets, that of the 21ſt, (26. I.) this of the

the 28th inſt. (30.I.) As I preſumed they would be deſirous to know the ſucceſs of their productions, for the removal of my prejudices, I could not, in gratitude to their good-natured endeavours, proceed farther until I had acquitted myſelf of ſo eſſential a duty, as the giving them this ſatisfaction; but am ſorry to inform them, that for conviction, to which I am always open, I am juſt where I was, if not, as is generally the caſe with ſearchers after truth, more than ever wedded to my old notions.

II. From my being of opinion, that the regal and papal powers are compatible in different hands, the firſt of theſe gentlemen muſt needs conclude I am ſanguine for the immediate eſtabliſhment of a nunciature in England: but the fallacy of his conſequence, he might obſerve, would be the ſame as our concluding the expediency of our late Stamp Act from the parliament's right of taxation: I have too high a notion of the wiſdom of the Britiſh legiſlature, to have the face to dictate or even ſuggeſt what ſhould have been done for the beſt. I confine myſelf to the bare theory, and methinks, in a ſtile rather of an humble queriſt, than in a peremptory magiſterial ſtrain; and it is in this light, Mr. printer, I would chuſe to be held, even ſhould my expreſſions in the ſequel chance to ſavour of the party-man; as you muſt be ſenſible, though couched in the ſame manner with his, they may be differently meant: nor do I think it an eſſential prerogative of popes to have nuncios; this privilege, as I apprehend, having originally ſprung from human condeſcenſion and munificence, and there being many other ways and means of carrying their mandates into execution.

III. To pretend, with this gentleman, that even granting theſe powers compatible, yet the *engine* of confeſſion, and a ſway over conſciences,

would always make the ſceptre bend the knee to the Tiara, in what relates to diſcipline only, proves to be a miſtake, from the declaration of the general aſſembly of the French clergy, ſo late as in 1682, againſt the already mentioned papal powers' infallibility, ſuperiority over general councils, &c. which is to this day a ſtanding rule in the Gallican church, though in points of orthodoxy, upon good terms with Rome. The conſequence, I own, might be dreaded, were this papal power to be exerted in an arbitrary and deſpotic way, without any regard to the canons, the rules of prudence and diſcretion: but who could pretend this to be the caſe? or that, after the ſaid aſſembly has made theſe the ſtandard of its exertion, crowned heads would tamely ſubmit to ſuch cobweb fetters?

IV. Nor do I ſee, as he would pretend, why the uniting both theſe powers in one perſon, ſhould prove leſs oppreſſive to liberty, than their being in ſeparate hands; as a monarchical government, from its power being more extenſive, is acknowledged a more powerful bar thereto than an ariſtocracy: *vis unita fortior* is a maxim well known in mechanics. But ſhould I allow of this plea for the Supremacy, what can apologize for the teſt? Or what tendency can tranſubſtantiation, the maſs, or the invocation of ſaints, have to the ſubverſion of government, that people muſt be obliged to abjure them? Is this not cramping conſcience, for cramping ſake? and is it not the unwarrantableneſs of ſuch a conduct, that I ſet out with repreſenting? The impreſſion which the other gentleman has made upon me, I poſtpone relating, being otherwiſe engaged at preſent.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

LET-

LETTER V.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *July* 12.

I. HERE I am come to the *Lover of Sincerity*, (30. I.) who takes up the cudgels for *Anti-papiſta*, on pretence that my ſolutions to his queries are *evaſive*, *fallacious*, and *unſatisfactory*. Had my plan been calculated for a trial of ſkill, I ſhould ſcarce engage him, two to one, even ſingly being great odds; but information being my only view, and deſpairing of a ſecond, I am reſolved to give him all the ſatisfaction I can.

II. 1ſt. He pretends, I ſhould have ſhewn, in anſwer to the firſt query, either that popery has never been uncharitable to proteſtancy, or that the dogma upon which her former uncharitableneſs was built, has not only been *variable*, but actually varied ſince that time; otherwiſe, ſays he, the oath of allegiance can be no ſecurity, as, for aught appears to the contrary, papiſts will take it againſt the inherent principles of their religion.

III. But his miſtake lies in ſuppoſing the former uncharitableneſs of papiſts, which I, for argument ſake, here agree to, was in conſequence of ſome dogmata of their religion, which I take to be invariable rules, indiſpenſibly binding to all its profeſſors, being thought nothing leſs than irreverſible decrees of heaven, promulgated only by man; whence it is, that acting in conſequence thereof, is ſaid to be acting upon principle; whereas it could have had its riſe at moſt but from ſome human regulations of diſcipline, which, as being built only upon prudential reaſons, may vary, as not ſuitable to all circumſtances in life.

IV. And ſhould he aſk, why theſe have not been reverſed? my anſwer is, that this is often done as well by diſuſe and contrary cuſtoms, as by formal repeals: and I aſk, in my turn, where the turbulent ſpirit and principle of the Baptiſts, for inſtance, have been expreſsly diſavowed? when or where have they diſclaimed the attempts made from *John* of Leyden down to *John William* of Ruremonde, for eſtabliſhing their chimerical kingdom? have the outrages of the rump-proceedings otherwiſe than tacitly been ever diſavowed? or did diſſentions amongſt proteſtants not run as high in that period, as ever theirs did with Rome? Surely the now pacific comportment of papiſts, without any open recantation, ſhould put them as much above cenſure as theirs. And, ſhould he aſk again, where the difference lies as to this, betwixt faith and diſcipline-rules? I anſwer, there may be none as to the reſponſibility of the perſonally guilty, but much, as to the imputability, if I may uſe the expreſſion, of the crime, which there may be made to affect thoſe not perſonally concerned; though not juſtifiably here. And here I would likewiſe aſk, why ſome Highlanders, not actually engaged in the rebellion of 45, were by act of parliament ſtripped of their plaids, though we never have heard of any ſuffering for another's ſtealing a horſe? As to the grounds of the charge of uncharitableneſs.

V. 2dly. He ſays, I ſhould have declared, in anſwer to the ſecond query, what I thought of the popiſh dogma, that makes all Heretics be in a ſtate of damnation. But ſuch a dogma, I ſhould think, would never be that of a Chriſtian church, unleſs underſtood of thoſe who act againſt conviction, or may be culpably ignorant, and thus far are the Athanaſian creed, and the 18th article of religion in the caſe, in relation to Arians and Deiſts;

or

or where is the difference betwixt damning papiſts and calling them idolaters? and after all, where is the uncharitableneſs herein? Such it were indeed effectually to damn folks, or wiſh them damned; but quite the reverſe, ſhould I think it, to put them in mind of what is thought a dangerous ſituation. (See 2. 3. 46.)

VI. 3dly. My anſwer to the third query, viz. that for any dogma to the contrary, Hereticks ought to be tolerated, and faith kept with them the ſame as with papiſts, he reckons *leme* like the reſt. But this is likewiſe built upon a falſe ſuppoſition; to wit, that the intolerance of, and not keeping faith with them, two dogmata flowing, ſays he, from that of damning them, were once profeſſed and never retracted by papiſts. Sure if the intolerance had ever been a dogma, *Charles* the fifth and *Ferdinand* the third, would not, without the imputation of hereſy, have ſigned the treaties of Paſſau and Weſtphalia. As to the warrantableneſs of breaking faith with them, I can find no dogma that looks that way, nor ſee that the proceedings of the council of Conſtance againſt *John Huſs*, amounts to ſuch; for hiſtories relate, that the ſafe conduct implied no more than that *Huſs* ſhould be at full liberty to plead his cauſe, but not return if condemned, which the council pretended was not in the emperor's power to grant, and that *Huſs* required no more, ſo confident was he of the truth of his cauſe, as appeared, ſay they, by the bills he got poſted up in his way to Conſtance. Nor indeed (had the ſafe conduct been otherwiſe couched) do I ſee how the emperor *Sigiſmundus* could have been ſo awed by the council, as, at leaſt, not to proteſt againſt the criminal proceſs; which yet he was ſo far from doing, that he himſelf put the criminal into the hands of the duke of Bavaria; or ſhould it be ſaid, that ſuch was the

awfulneſs of councils in thoſe days, that no one durſt even mutter at their proceedings, then I ſay, *John Huſs* muſt have been a ſimpleton, which is far from the account we have of him, for having accepted of any ſafe conduct. However this be, I ſhall be obliged to this gentleman to be more particular in reference to the ſolemn deciſion, he ſays, was there made, and the pope's avowal thereof to king *Auguſtus*, after the treaty of *Arlanſtadt*; to tell us, for inſtance, the tenor of the deciſion, what ſeſſion it was made in, what pope it was that avowed it, where *Arlanſtadt* ſtands in the map, &c. for could I be clear that this were a dogma, I ſhould not ballance a moment in renouncing for ever a church in whoſe orthodoxy I found ſo eſſential a flaw, as the difference betwixt this and juſtifying a lye, if any, can be but trifling: mean while, what was obſerved in the ſecond paragraph of my letter of the 31ſt of *May*, will have great weight with me; nor do I think, even were I to own both theſe to be dogmatas, that they muſt be the conſequence of damning all Heretics, unleſs perhaps, like devils, they were held to be irretrievably damned. Now if papiſts' charity be not confined to the juſt only, ſo as thus to damn all the unrighteous, who could think it would be ſo to thoſe of their own church?

VII. 4thly. He complains that my anſwer to the fourth query is obſcure. I ſhould have taken it kind had he ſhewn where the obſcurity lay. I ſee nothing myſterious in my ſaying, the pope has never been held infallible in dethroning kings, and abſolving their ſubjects from their allegiance. With regard to the pope's infallibility, the queſtion is not, ſays he, what is defined, but what is held as of faith; but the difference of both appears from what was ſaid of imputability, (o.IV.) and ſuppoſing there was none, the one being as bad as the other, is it

not

not his buſineſs to ſhew what papiſts hold as to this? or can he in reaſon expect that I muſt prove a negative? As to the infallibility of the church, he finds fault with my calling thoſe divines the moſt rational, who admit, that there always was and ever will be a viſible untainted church ſomewhere; becauſe this *ſomewhere* cannot be pointed out; but is it not certain there are ſuch things as the ſolſtitial and equinoctial points? that thoſe are in the tropics, and theſe in the equator? and yet no aſtronomer has ever taken it upon him to determine where. I muſt own that ſuch a vague and generical church were as uſeleſs to the unity of Chriſtians as thoſe undetermined points are to find out the longitude at ſea, as it ſhould ſeem the ſame thing, that there ſhould be no church, as not to know where to find her; yet that ſo it is, I could ſhew him from others than thoſe he is pleaſed to call proteſtant, *nonjuring, jacobitical mongrels.* (See 8. 1. 16.)

VIII. 5thly. of my ſaying, in anſwer to the fifth query, that, for aught papiſts know, the majority of the Engliſh have Jeſuits for their directors, he makes an important conceſſion. But ſurely he ſhould have made a difference betwixt what is given up for argument ſake, and a conceſſion; this is allowing the point to be true, whereas that is barely ſuppoſing it to be ſo, in order to ſhew the unfairneſs of the conſequence deduced from it: ſuch hypotheſes, the algebraiſts and arithmeticians make uſe of to work queſtions in *falſe poſition*; yet who will ſay they look upon them as true? this is like having two ſtrings to one's bow, firſt by denying the premiſes, and then the fairneſs of the conſequence, after having allowed them. This diſtinction I ſhould be glad he would be attentive to, as otherwiſe he may palm tenets upon me, though far from my thoughts; for inſtance,

IX. 6thly.

IX. 6thly. From my anſwering to the ſixth query, whether it be not the doctrine of the Jeſuits, that popes may excommunicate princes, in this hypothetical manner, to wit, that it may be ſo for aught papiſts know, but that their doctrine makes no rule of faith; he infers, that I allow the fact; and of courſe, as he ſays, in his remarks on my anſwer to the ſeventh query, that their penitents imbibe the doctrine, which thoſe even of other prieſts, however anti-jeſuitical, do not diſclaim, who conſequently have no reaſon to complain of the ſeverity of the law; than which nothing can be more unfair and diſingenuous. That Jeſuits or others profeſs dangerous doctrines, and impreſs them on the minds of their penitents, is his buſineſs to ſhew, which if he does to ſatisfaction, I agree they in juſtice may be made to ſmart for it, without however affecting ſuch as differ with them in opinion, and are ready to take the oath of allegiance, the moſt effectual and only neceſſary ſecurity to government. If it be a dogma, that popes may excommunicate princes, I ſhall not take upon me to ſay; but that theſe may be depoſed or their ſubjects abſolved from their allegiance in conſequence thereof, is what I denied in my laſt to be ſuch; (37. III.) nay, I ſay more, that cenſures affecting temporalities are human devices, for reclaiming delinquents, or perhaps benefiting by their ſpoils.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

P. S. Here I ſubmit it to the public, if the cement of what the *Lover of Sincerity* gibingly calls my elaborate ſyſtematical edifice, be not ſo tempered as to be proof againſt all the machinary he has hitherto brought to overthrow it, or if he has room to treat my ſyſtem with contempt, when the new modelling of the oath of abjuration ſeems, by the public prints, to be under conſideration.

To

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *July* 12.

I. THE fury of your religious diſputants ſeems greatly abated ſince you wiſely thought proper to lay it under ſome wholſome reſtraints on one ſide, which it had become full time to do, becauſe great offence was taken at the liberties aſſumed.

II. The gentlemen champions, on the popiſh ſide, opened their direct attack on proteſtant practice by the accuſation of ſlander and miſrepreſentation, for which their church has been ever peculiarly famous. There are no kind of falſehoods concerning thoſe of the proteſtant perſuaſion that could be invented, which their prieſts have not prevailed on the poor ignorant laity to believe: and what cannot a people be made to credit, whoſe idolatries are ſo groſs, that they will even puniſh the very idols which they worſhip, if their requeſts are not ſoon granted, as many images of St. *Anthony* could teſtify, if they had the faculties of mind and gift of utterance for doing it. I ſhould be glad to hear how one of your popiſh-prieſtly correſpondents will reconcile to right diſcipline, and free from the charges of idolatry on one hand, or profanation on the other, the practices of praying to the images of that ſaint of their church, for whatever they want either on ſea or land, and, if he does not in a reaſonable time, as they think, work a miracle to oblige them, then they duck or drub him, with the uſe alſo of groſsly-abuſive language, and continue puniſhing him till, from the courſe of nature, or from accident, that happens, which they deſired; and then, on the ſuppoſition that his ſtubbornneſs has been conquered, they become

become reconciled to him again, and kneel in worſhip before his image-ſhip, and ſay their prayers to him in the ſame manner as before he had given them the ſuppoſed offence. Nor can they have the face to deny, that there are what they call miraculous images of various ſaints, to which they attribute the power of doing miracles; and that they do ſuppoſe the power to lie in the image, is evident from this, that among the number of images of the ſame ſaint, which there are at the ſame place, one only is ſuppoſed to have the power of doing miracles, though the reſt are as much conſecrated, and made equally ſacred. Now if the operation was ſuppoſed to be performed by the ſaint, believed to be in heaven, and not by the figure upon earth, why is one image among forty thouſand of the ſame ſaint only allowed to be miraculous? Yet that ſuch is the caſe, I appeal to the teſtimony of all who ever travelled, and made obſervations on ſuch matters.

III. Where ſuch blind credulity reigns, and which only can reign by the encouragement and connivance of prieſts, who have, by the means of confeſſion and abſolution, the conſciences of all the laity under their direction; I ſay where ſuch credulity prevails, are we to wonder that prieſtly ſcandals are as readily credited as pious idolatry is practiſed? Hence has poor *Anna Bullen* (who was not actively, but perhaps in ſome degree indirectly the cauſe of aboliſhing the papal ſupremacy in England, and therein of laying the foundation of the reformation) been repreſented by the prieſts, and conſidered by the laity in all popiſh countries, as the direct oppoſite to the Virgin *Mary*, whom they ſtile *Queen of the Angels*; for unfortunate *Anna Bullen* is ſo much treated as *Queen of the Devils*, that one Spaniſh virago, in a ſcolding fit, calling another by her name, is conſidered as ſuch an

outrage

outrage as will almoſt or quite juſtify murder, as comprehending the names of ſtrumpet, adultreſs, murdreſs, witch, heretic, blaſphemer, and every thing that is horrid, infamous, and hateful, as every one muſt know who has reſided in that kingdom; where, as in other popiſh countries, the ignorant laity, nay even ſome of the clergy, are made to believe the proteſtants do not believe in Chriſt, and of courſe, that they muſt blaſpheme againſt him; for, in mixed converſation, I was once aſked myſelf, by a young Franciſcan friar, if proteſtants believed in Chriſt's being the ſon of God.

IV. This is, however, but a ſmall ſample of the ſlanders which they invent and propagate againſt proteſtants, the founders of whoſe churches in ſculpture, painting and tapiſtry-work, they always repreſent as arch-fiends, ſprawling devils, ſmote by divine thunders under the feet of the pope, who repreſents righteouſneſs and truth in their religious and emblematical performances, in order to impreſs the minds of the people with the moſt horrid ideas of them. I could point out the very convents in which there are pictures of martydroms ſuffered at Tyburn by ſuch ſaints as father *Garnet*; who were decently hanged for treaſon, in which pictures the holy traitors are repreſented with glories round their heads, rudely dragging up a wild mountain that has a gallows on it (which is to be ſure a right repreſentation of the ſpot on which Tyburn ſtands) by mobs of ſavages, with the faces of furies, tawny ſun-burnt hides, and all entirely naked, except a clout that is about the middle. Let me then aſk theſe complainers of miſrepreſentation, if theſe are not ſlanders and falſehoods propagated in the moſt effectual manner, for making proteſtants and Engliſhmen the objects of deteſtation? eſpecially as thoſe traitors are repre-

ſented

ſented, not as dying for treaſon againſt the ſtate, but as martyrs for the pure Catholic faith, as profeſſed by thoſe of the Romiſh church, which they call the only true one, and pronounce all to be inevitably damned who die out of the pale of it.

V. It might appear riciculous to ſay, what I have heard from good authority, that, before queen *Anne*'s reign, the prieſts had made the poor ignorant people believe, in the interior parts of Spain, that the Engliſh, upon their falling off from the true faith, had been all transformed into the ſhape of devils, with horns, tails, and cloven hoofs: ſo that on our army's going thither, to ſupport the cauſe of *Charles* of Auſtria, the people became amazed at the tales that had been told them, from ſeeing a race of people ſo much handſomer than themſelves; for the Spaniards, in general, are the uglieſt people in Europe. So much for the complaint of theſe abuſes of toleration, of their being miſrepreſented, ſlandered and belied. And if they continue the diſputation, or their unjuſtifiable and illegal practice of impoſing upon and perverting poor ignorant proteſtants, I hope they will become counteracted, by being ſet in their true lights by many others, as well as,

Sir, your humble ſervant,

A Friend to Truth.

LETTER VI.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *July* 19.

I. HITHERTO, Mr. Printer, I have been taken up with giving my thoughts on the inconſiſtency

ſiſtency of eſtabliſhing in a proteſtant ſtate, oaths and penalties ſubverſive of the freedom of thought, eſpecially in what concerns conſcience, ſo neceſſary a guide in our way to heaven, that St. *Paul* ſays, "whatſoever is not of faith, is ſin;" and indeed, thus much muſt be allowed of every man's conſcience in particular; unleſs we ſhould give into that long ſince exploded paradox, of blind obedience and implicit faith.

II. This diſquiſition was but occaſional, owing only to the paper-war carried on betwixt a *Real Freethinker*, and well wiſhers to the proteſtant cauſe, with what ſucceſs they are beſt judges. What I chiefly built upon was, that I could find no dogma of papiſts pernicious to government; and that, I fancied, nothing, under ſuch could warrant making children, for generations together, bear the ſuppoſed ſins of their parents, whereof yet ſome never have filled up the meaſure. After all that has been ſaid, I have, to my great mortification, as yet, found nothing capable of beating me out of this hold: though, what I fancy ſhould be improved into an argument of my candour, I have diſguiſed nothing I could ſee had a tendency that way.

III. Such are my notions of this matter. If I am wrong, I deſire no better than to be ſet to rights; but ſhould I chance to be right, it will appear at firſt ſight, how vain the pains taken by ſome late popiſh champions, in imitation of that common-place book for exaggerating perſonal faults, the *Hiſtory of the Variations*, and the recriminations of their antagoniſts muſt have been: the abuſe of things can be no reaſonable exception thereto, nor reflection on ſuch as had no hand therein. The perverſion of original revelation by bills of divorce, and thoſe rabinical traditions which Chriſt has rectified in his ſermon on the Mount

Mount, could afford but a weak handle to the Deiſts againſt its reality. This is what induced me to decline the uſe of ſuch weapons, and made me declare above (24. IX.) how ill they ſerved the turn of the *Freethinker* againſt proteſtants; and hence it is, that they make none of thoſe ſcruples I intend making bold to ſend you, after I have got rid of the preſent debate.

IV. Mean while, I muſt obſerve, that ſuch reaſoners as *a friend to truth*, in laſt Saturday's *Ledger*, (45.I.) muſt never expect to make a conqueſt of me; he ſhould, as has been juſt obſerved, have, for the purpoſe, directly attacked, not vulgar abuſe, or the hideous colours oppoſite parties paint each other in; (a practiſe as open to the abettors of truth as falſhood) but the dogmas of invoking ſaints, and worſhipping their images, the only things, as to this, eſtabliſhed by the council of Trent. Nor do I even ſee the fooleries he complains of, however groſs, can reaſonably be conſtrued into ſuch bare-faced profanation and idolatry as he may imagine; or, making allowance for the low-bred and illiberal actors, be reckoned irreconcileable to *right diſcipline*; pray is it not likely the Jews, who murmured ſo much againſt their deliverer in the deſart, had *drubbed* him, if within their reach, as they have crucified Chriſt? Or might they not poſſibly think that, as in human affairs, by ſuch rough treatment he might be brought to a compliance? Did they not worſhip and do homage to him more in the ark and temple than elſewhere? Yet, who will ſay, they held him to be but an idol, or as ſome Deiſts pretend, (See 9. 11. 6.) a mere local or tutelar God? Or that they worſhipped the place, and not him; or if, which ſeems to be fact, they thought him peculiarly in ſuch worſhipping places, why might thoſe papiſts, from ſome ſuppoſed miracles or otherwiſe, not fancy the ſaint was, or at

leaſt

leaſt heard their prayers, more in one image than in another? But I would not inſiſt upon this, I only pretend, that ſuch extravagancies, being only excreſcences affecting the ſkin, not vitals of the dogma, may peel off like fiſh ſcales, and yet this not look the worſe for it. (See 2. 9. 62.)

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *July* 19.

I. I Have obſerved ſeveral long letters in your *Ledger* from a gentleman who calls himſelf a *Real Seeker*, and who makes a ſufficient parade with his objections and ſcruples about one knows not well what. For my part I cannot find out what object he is *ſeeking*, unleſs it be a juſtification of popery, by a compariſon of ſome of its corruptions with the weakneſſes and blemiſhes of ſome proteſtant ſyſtems ſo called, which all who underſtand the true grounds of the reformation are as ready to abandon as he is. But what is popery profited by this kind of ſucceſs? If ſome ſects, or, if you pleaſe ſome churches who call themſelves proteſtants, have deviated from the light of revealed religion, will it follow from thence that popery hath adhered to it, and never put herſelf under the conduct of a blind guide? At the rate he goes on, who can ſay when he will come to the end of his ſearch?

II. At his firſt ſetting out, I imagined he was an honeſt man, who was really at a loſs to what profeſſion of Chriſtians he ſhould join himſelf. There are ſome tokens ſince in the progreſs of his pretended inquiries, that make it ſeem as if he had taken

on with the papiſts, but, if this conjecture is right, one may preſume, by his denying the moſt notorious tenets of their church, that he is but a new proſelite, whom his wary converters do not think fit as yet to truſt with the whole ſecret: not to mention ſome palpable inſinuations, that he is not perfectly ſatisfied with his choice, and would be glad to join himſelf to a more faultleſs communion, if he could find it. Whatever his caſe is, I am obliged to believe him *ſincere* in his *ſeekings*, and on that conſideration, ſhall moſt readily recommend him to an expedient the moſt promiſing I know of, to eaſe his mind and ſhorten his ſearch.

III. Let him forget, if he can, for a while, the peculiarities both of popery and proteſtantiſm, and ſet himſelf down ſeriouſly to the ſtudy of the Bible, but particularly the New Teſtament. Let him note, as he goes along, thoſe paſſages which appear to have relation to his ſcruples, and particularly thoſe which concern the *ſupremacy* of an earthly guide. I will not ſay but the ſcriptures, if he is a capable and ſincere reader of them, may furniſh him with a ſort of religion in the event, which does not exactly agree with any *eſtabliſhed* ſyſtem in the world, either as to articles of faith, or forms of worſhip. But this he will gain by it: He may follow thoſe forms of worſhip, and entertain thoſe doctrines he derives from ſcripture after diligent and ſingle-hearted inquiry, without being eſteemed either an Heretic or a Schiſmatic by his maſter in heaven, even though he ſhould be obliged to worſhip and profeſs in his cloſet, and apart from every viſible congregation he knows of. While on the other hand, by practiſing the preceptive part of the Goſpel, he will find himſelf of the ſame religion with every charitable, benevolent, humble-minded, ſelf-denying, honeſt and virtuous man upon the face of the earth, and inliſted

liſted into a brotherhood of which every Papiſt, Proteſtant, Jew, Greek, Turk and Infidel, is ſo far a member as to have a demand upon him for the moſt ſubſtantial offices of love and affection, whenever they fall in his way.

I am, ſir, your humble ſervant,

A Real Catholic.

LETTER VII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *July* 26.

I. AFTER having waited, to no purpoſe, a reaſonable time for the rejoinder of your correſpondents, or, what might be expected in caſe of conviction, their avowal of what I have hitherto been upon, I think, Mr. Printer, I may be allowed to paſs with a good grace to other ſcruples. I had in my own mind formed a plan of propoſing them, but now fancy that arrangement not ſo material but that it may and ſhould be altered, in complaiſance to the zealous gentleman who ſubſcribes himſelf in laſt Saturday's Ledger *a real Catholic.* (49. I.)

II. At firſt ſetting out, he is at a loſs to know what I would be at, unleſs it be, ſays he, a juſtification of popery, by comparing its corruptions with the weakneſſes and blemiſhes of ſome proteſtant ſyſtems, which all who underſtand the true grounds of the reformation are ready, ſays he, to abandon. This makes me think he has not peruſed, or but curſorily read all my letters; otherwiſe he muſt have ſeen this was the very thing I found fault with in the *Freethinker*, (See 47. III.) that the dogma alone was my citadel, and that ſuch abuſes

I abandoned, as governors do the towns with their ſuburbs and outworks, when thought not tenable.

III. Nor even do I ſee how any proteſtant, however converſant in the grounds of the reformation, could in reaſon diſclaim the blemiſhes of any ſyſtem of proteſtancy; unleſs at the ſame time he diſavowed that proteſtant principle of ſcripiure's being the only rule of faith, whereof ſuch ſyſtems are the natural conſequences. Should a cabinet council concert a bad plan of operations, pray would the members thereof not be at leaſt as anſwerable for the miſcarriages of the campaign, as the ſoldiers that take the field to execute it? (See 2. 5. 16. &c.)

IV. If the account I have given of my religious perſuaſion (10. III.) does not ſatisfy him, and that he muſt needs conclude from my letters that I have taken on with papiſts, who have been wary enough not to have initiated me in all their myſteries, it would have been but fair in him to have produced his grounds for ſuch looſe conjectures, and ſhewn, what thoſe notorious popiſh tenets are, which I denied to be ſuch; vague accuſations, he ſhould know, are never liſtened to in courts of judicature: to ſpeak the truth, Mr. Printer, ſo foul are the dealings theſe rival religions are ſaid to aſperſe each other with, that I never applied to either for their ſecrets, but, after reading ſome of their works on both ſides, betook myſelf to compare the canons of councils, eſpecially that of Trent, and that, with all the impartiality and attention I was maſter of, with the articles and liturgy of our national church, to ſee which I ſhould find more conformable to ſcripture, antiquity and reaſon; which method ſeems, in a great meaſure, to coincide with that laid down by this very gentleman, and it is the miſtruſt I had of my own abilities, that made me thus appeal to the public.

V. Now

V. Now, to come to the point, he particularly ſpecifies, and which makes one of my capital ſcruples, the *ſupremacy*, as he calls it, of an *earthly guide*, they are the very means he preſcribes for a religious inquiry, that to me prove its neceſſity. In turning over the New Teſtament I find a text that ſays, the church is to be proof againſt the gates of hell, which to me, without ſuch a guide, were like impoſſible; for what is the church but a body of people, profeſſing the ſame tenets of faith, and obſerving the ſame rites in the worſhip of God? Now the reading of ſcripture, by his own confeſſion, may furniſh one with a ſort of religion which does not exactly agree with any eſtabliſhed ſyſtem in the world, either as to articles of faith, or forms of worſhip; therefore this lecture is inſufficient, and ſomething elſe muſt be neceſſary for perpetuating the church, by enabling her to withſtand hell-gates; now let him ſay what this can be, unleſs this earthly guide.

VI. What ſecurity can he give that this ſcriptural Catholic will not be eſteemed either a Heretic or Schiſmatic by his maſter in heaven, when we find another text in ſcripture that ſays, whatever the overſeers of the church bind or looſe upon earth will be ratified in Heaven? or can it be reckoned any great advantage that he were to be of the religion of a Turk and Infidel? or could he not be indebted to ſuch in the moſt ſubſtantial offices of love and affection without conſulting the ſcripture? If *a real Catholic* would inſinuate hereby, what I ſhrewdly ſuſpect from the very title he aſſumes, the all-ſufficiency of Deiſm, he might ſee from my firſt letter (10. III.) that, as to this, I had been already fixed, however, not ſo but that I ſhould readily hearken to whatever I found properly urged from that quarter.

VII. And

VII. And really, to return to our point, if beſides our voluminous law-books a Judge be neceſſary in the ſtate to determine the pretenſions of the contending parties, I do not ſee why, beſides the ſcripture, ſuch ſhould not be requiſite in the church; (See 2. 2. 9.) and hence it is, that I am of opinion, the objection Lord Herbert and other modern Deiſts have made to revelation, from the diviſions often reigning touching its authentickneſs, genuine ſenſe, &c. can never be ſolidly anſwered in the proteſtant way. (See 9. 1. 130.) A late ingenious diſſenting divine only retorted the argument upon the law of nature, whoſe number of articles and natural ſenſe, the Deiſts themſelves are not agreed in; which, though true, was not to the purpoſe, as both the ancient and modern Deiſts admitted of legiſlators, philoſophers and other living guides; the moſt prudential ſteps they could have taken to eſtabliſh a conſtant uniformity in doctrine and worſhip; whereas proteſtants allow of no other judge but the ſcripture, whoſe ſenſe and meaning is frequently the very bone of contention.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *July* 26.

I. I Read in your paper of laſt Saturday, a letter wrote by a perſon who calls himſelf a Merchant, wherein he diſcovers himſelf no friend to the preſent government, under which we live; for in one part of his letter he declares himſelf an advocate for univerſal toleration, and then adds (for

fear

fear we ſhould overlook his great eſteem for the friends of the pope) popery not excepted. Who your correſpondent is, the Merchant is hinting at in his letter, I cannot ſay, but he charges him with ſaying, the Catholics hold as an article of faith, that they are not bound to fulfil their engagements with Heretics. And then adds, aſk the merchants upon 'change, who trade to Catholic countries, whether they experience the operation of this principle upon their Catholic correſpondents? He then adds, I will be bound to ſay, from no little experience of my own, that their anſwer will be, they know not. Now, ſir, that your correſpondent is a merchant, I can't deny, but there are many ſorts of merchants, ſome trade for one thing and ſome for an other; and I look upon your new correſpondent to be a trader in popiſh ſuperſtition; for I am certain that no friend to the preſent happy conſtitution can once think of having the bloodthirſty papiſts tolerated to carry on their trumpery religion in theſe kingdoms. Hath not this land ſuffered enough already by the ſcarlet whore? How often hath ſhe made herſelf drunk with proteſtant blood! and is not ſhe longing to play the ſame game over again? how were man, woman and child knocked down a few days ago only for hearing a clergyman of the church of England preach the pure doctrine of the church? and the cry was, down with the Heretics. This is only a foretaſte of what the proteſtants may juſtly expect, if ever popery ſhould be tolerated in thoſe kingdoms. But may God confound all their ſchemes, or elſe woe to England that is already almoſt over-run with popiſh ſuperſtition. The popiſh merchant (for ſo I muſt conceive of him) ſeems to expreſs his concern, that any perſons ſhould be ſo wicked as to attempt to revive, and enforce dormant penal laws againſt any ſect whatſoever. How he ſeems to put

on an hypocritical cloke, and would fain make us believe he is not for hurting any Scot, when, Mr. Printer, if he is a Papiſt, (as no doubt appears to me but he is) he with the reſt of the poor deluded Party would deſtroy us hereticks, without any law at all, witneſs the above hint; therefore it cannot be wicked to put the law of the kingdom in force againſt the wilful breakers of it, though it be done by a Reforming Carpenter Conſtable, as the Merchant calls him. It is true, I know but little of this Conſtable, but among the friends of his country he is looked upon as a uſeful man; and I remember the judge who tried the popiſh Prieſt (for I was preſent at the trial) told the jury he thought the carpenter acted from an honeſt principle. This the Merchant chooſes to conceal. Mr. Printer, I ſhould be glad to know who this Merchant is, and what he trades in. I ſuppoſe him to be a real merchant, and trades from a far country, and that his lading conſiſts of popiſh trumpery. I remember we had an account in the public papers, ſome time ſince, of a great number of crucifixions and other popiſh merchandize ſeized by ſome of the king's officers, who certainly did their duty, perhaps your merchant-correſpondent was the owner of them. If ſo, I don't wonder he is ſo much againſt the laws being put in execution againſt Popery; for if that was done, the hope of his gain in that part of his merchandize, relative to crucifixes, &c. would be loſt. If, ſir, it was lawful to ſeize this ſort of merchandize, as things not ſuffered to be had in this proteſtant country, ſurely it cannot be unlawful to ſeize the Prieſts who are the cauſe of their coming over, and when they are over, the cauſe of the deluded people making uſe of them. What your correſpondent Anti-papiſta is I cannot tell, but the Merchant declares he knows him very well, and that

he

he is a man of integrity and goodneſs of heart. I wiſh I had the ſame reaſon to ſay ſo of the perſon who writes againſt him, which it will ever be impoſſible to do, while he maintains ſuch principles as, if countenanced, will certainly overturn our happy conſtitution, both in church and ſtate; for as Popery riſes the contrary religion muſt fall. I can aſſure the Merchant, that before the laws were ſo much as attempted to be put in execution againſt the Papiſts, all the mild means poſſible were made uſe of to reſtrain them from their unlawful proceedings, but to no purpoſe; and to the knowledge of many, both in the city and country, orders were ſent to the prieſts to ſhut up their Maſs-houſes, which was complied with for a few weeks, and then without any toleration opened again. Such are the obedient ſubjects of Rome, not of England; for that man can never be called obedient, who wilfully breaks the law of his country; but ſuch are the Papiſts. When a man, Mr. Printer, wants to ſecure his field from the ravening beaſts of prey, he builds a wall, when a breach is made he repairs the walls again. Thus a wiſe man acts; he does not ſay let the beaſts go in and devour the choice fruits which I have by much labour brought to great perfection. How were the choice fruits of the goſpel brought to ſuch perfection in this happy land? was it not by much labour? How did our forefathers ſweat and toil, yea many of them ſhed their deareſt blood, and were burned to aſhes for thoſe great privileges we are in danger of loſing? at length a wall was raiſed, to wit, the laws againſt Popery were eſtabliſhed; but the Merchant, with the reſt of the popiſh advocates, want to make a breach in the wall, nay, they have already made it; the beaſts of prey have entered the goſpel-field, and are as faſt as poſſible deſtroying the tender grapes. I know ſeveral people have been turned from the

church

church of England, and are now ſucking in the poiſon of the church of Rome; up then ye ſons of freedom, build up the broken walls of Jeruſalem; come forth to the battle of the Lord againſt the mighty foe; the laws of your country are on your ſide; hark, don't you hear the cry already gone forth from the ſcarlet whore? turn or burn. How were the young men tortured the other Day for not bowing down to a popiſh idol! Enough to make one tremble at the thought of Popery. Remember the female Proteſtant champion, big with child, committed to the flames! ſee the infant burſt from her womb! behold the bloody Papiſt, ſticking it upon the point of his halbert, and in a triumph more cruel than that of hell itſelf, crying out, behold the child of an heretic, and then toſſed it into the devouring flames! Oh England, England, cry to your God night and day, up ye champions of the goſpel, make the churches ring wherever ye go; cry aloud and ſpare not, lift up your voices like trumpets, ſhew the people the damnable errors of Rome. Remember what the great prophet Iſaiah ſays, behold I have ſet watchmen upon thy walls, O Jeruſalem, that ſhall never hold their peace day or night. This is a night of darkneſs, yea, of popiſh darkneſs. How many thouſands of Jeſuits driven out of their own country have taken ſhelter here! and your new correſpondent, the Merchant, appears to be one; let him be aſhamed, and never more dare to ſet pen to paper, as an advocate for Popery. I hope he will always find ſome honeſt Proteſtant to oppoſe him. Much more might be ſaid upon this head, but conſidering myſelf only a babe in this great work, I conclude with hoping ſome able hand will undertake to defend the Proteſtant cauſe, and in the mean time I beg leave to ſubſcribe my-

Mr. Printer, your humble ſervant.

Young Anti-papiſta.

*** *We*

*** *We ſhall inſert no more letters written in this ſtrain, nor ſhould have done this, but to ſhew the Popiſh advocates, what a ſpirit they are raiſing up by their own raſh proceedings: and therefore as they will be indiſcreet, we muſt exerciſe caution in their indulgence in controverſies.*

LETTER VIII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, *Auguſt* 2.

I. ALthough, beſides the ſcruple mentioned in my laſt relative to an earthly guide, or judge in religious diſputes, I intended propoſing not a few more concerning proteſtancy in general; thoſe points of controverſy in particular, in oppoſition to which oaths have been here calculated, and other religious conſtitutions of the eſtabliſhed church: yet I do not think it adviſable to venture farther, after the alarming manner *Young Anti-papiſta* beats to arms. I am any body's man at arm's length, but an arrant coward, ſword in hand: the very thought of blood chills it in my ſhuddering veins, for though I do not ſee how my letters can fairly be reckoned patroniſing popery, or myſelf its advocate; yet, being already ſuſpected by a *real Catholic* of having taken on with papiſts, whatever drops from my pen with never ſo laudable a view, may be made a pretence of ſowering the tempers of ſuch touchy gentlemen, whereof I ſhould be extremely ſorry to be even the innocent cauſe.

II. Wherefore, Mr. Printer, after returning you my unfeigned thanks for your paſt indulgence, for which I ſhall ever retain a deep ſenſe of gratitude, I with the utmoſt regret bid you farewell; requeſting only, that if hereafter I ſhould meet with any thing inſerted in your eſtimable paper, tending to heighten or leſſen the opinion I have ſome time entertained of popery, you would give me leave, for the ſake of aſſuaging my remorſes, to offer my thoughts

thoughts thereupon; as I cannot ſee how any of your correſpondents, however exceptious, can in reaſon take offence thereat; unleſs they meant to erect an abſolute inquiſition or ſomething worſe in the land, by obſtructing the moſt promiſing avenue for bringing relief to the moſt excruciating qualms, or (ſuppoſing I were a rigid Papiſt) refuſing a right, allowed by all laws, of ſtanding up in one's own defence, when attacked.

III. I have no reaſon to complain of the gentlemen who have honoured my letters with their remarks, which, far from breathing any inflaming acrimony, were made with all the philoſophic, nay, chriſtian temper I could have wiſhed: I only lament their having, for the moſt part, left me in ſuſpence by diſcontinuing their good offices, without telling what they thought of my replies, or more properly ulterior doubts: before I take leave of them, I cannot help ſaying I am ſorry they do not turn Real Seekers: all others looking upon things more or leſs with a jaundiced eye, are diſqualified for making any reſearches. Sir *Iſaac Newton*, *Des Cartes*, and other freethinking philoſophers, had never made the figure they have in the literary world, had they ever groveled in the vulgar notions they ſucked in with their milk: I wonder how any man of but common ſenſe could imagine, that on the laſt day it will be ſufficient to tell the great judge, as an apology for his religious perſuaſion, his parents had told him ſo and ſo.

IV. But do not miſtake me, Mr. Printer, as if I would have people renounce their paternal religion, to run a madding like the Pyrrhonians, after they knew not what: No, no; religion being the principle of moral agency, as bread is the ſtaff of life, there is no laudably doing without ſome ſpecies thereof on this ſide of the grave. I make a diſ-

a difference betwixt turning oneſelf out of houſe and home, and getting the foundation of it examined; this is what the logicians call a *methodical* doubt, which the world is indebted to for ſo many uſeful diſcoveries, that, an *effectual*, which, inſtead of opening a vein, is like cutting off one's head to get cured, as in the interim one may be ſummoned to another world, where without ſome religion, there will be no mercy found, and where during the diſquiſition, if but candid, any will ſuffice. (See 9. 1. 68.)

V. But how this inquiry is to be carried on, is an object worthy of their moſt ſerious conſideration. I ſhould offer my thoughts thereupon, had I not been cowed by our anti-papiſtical ſtrippling: however after referring the reader to *Cladget*'s rules, (4. 1. 42.) I am bold to ſay, that theſe religious champions can never make any thing of it, whilſt overlooking the theory and dogma, they make practice and opinion, for which, ſo far as I could have hitherto obſerved, they (I here except *a Lover of Sincerity*, from whoſe erudition and ſound reaſoning faculty, were our correſpondence to continue, I ſhould expect to borrow much light) are cut out, their principal butt.

Your's,

A Real Seeker.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, *Auguſt* 2.

I. AN abſence of ten days from the place of my uſual reſidence prevented my ſeeing your *Ledger* of *July* 12 (37. I.) till yeſterday (the 23d) when I found the *Real Seeker* greatly diſſatisfied with my remarks on his anſwers to *Anti-papiſta*'s queries. I find

find one ſhould always keep a good guard when the engagement is to be with ſo accompliſhed a veteran in the noble ſcience of defence. He makes conceſſions, and when his opponent hath turned them to his own uſe, why then truly they are conceſſions only *for argument ſake*. But if this is the caſe with reſpect to what he allowed, of the *variableneſs* of popiſh dogmata, he muſt ſtill be of opinion, that thoſe dogmata are *invariable*, and that deſtroys his anſwer to *Anti-papiſta*'s query.

II. As to his *diſtinction* between dogmata founded on the decrees of heaven promulgated by man, and ſuch as have had their riſe only from regulations of diſcipline, I would aſk him a ſhort queſtion. Are thoſe decrees of the council of Trent, for example, which betray ſo ſhocking a want of charity towards Proteſtants, as to *curſe* thoſe who do not adhere to them, by a ſolemn *Anathema*, to be conſidered only as regulations of diſcipline? An honeſt Papiſt will tell as aſſuredly that they are the decrees of heaven promulgated by man. And ſhould the *Real Seeker* deny it, he muſt, to ſatisfy all ſides, be put to the expence of more *diſtinctions* than he is aware of. If he ſhould admit, that theſe anathematizing deciſions are the decrees of heaven, he muſt admit, that they are *invariable*. And then he has only one quibble at which to creep out, *viz.* that the decrees of heaven cannot be called *uncharitable*. But then here ariſes another difficulty; He will have to prove, that the canons of Trent are the decrees of heaven. The Proteſtants cannot prevent his begging this queſtion, but they have, I ſhould think, a little more ſenſe than to grant it. And this may ſuffice for a full reply to his explanation of his anſwer to *Anti-papiſta*'s ſecond query, where he is plainly mumbling *this* thiſtle, without being able either to ſwallow it, or to diſgorge it.

As

III. As to the *diſuſe* of exceptionable dogmata, I will tell him the difference between the Baptiſts and the Papiſts; The former have *renounced* the turbulent dogmata of their forefathers, by publiſhing and openly avowing a *contrary ſyſtem*. The Papiſts have never done this. The Engliſh Baptiſts never think of diſturbing the government by any practices grounded on the turbulent principles eſpouſed by their forefathers. The Papiſts have done it over and over, and are ſtrongly ſuſpected by ſome people to be *meditating* ſuch diſturbances at this very time. *Down with the Heretics* is a cry that hath been heard in our ſtreets, not many days ago. Nothing leſs therefore than an open reverſal of all their turbulent dogmata, by ſome ſolemn authentic act of the whole body, can poſſibly ſatisfy a Proteſtant government, or a Proteſtant people, that the Papiſts are become either more charitable or leſs dangerous inmates than their reſtleſs forefathers. When this is done, but not till then, his diſtinction between *reſponſibility* and *imputability*, may deſerve ſome conſideration.

IV. But as he takes the benefit of ſo many diſtinctions, give me leave to avail myſelf of *one* not quite ſo frivolous. "*Charles* V. and *Ferdinand* III. "SIGNED the Treaties of Paſſau and Weſtphalia." What then? Why then *intolerance*, and *not keeping faith with Heretics*, could not be dogmata of the Roman church; otherwiſe theſe emperors would have been Heretics themſelves. True, if it could be proved that they KEPT the faith *they* then pledged to thoſe Heretics, whenever they had it in their power to break it. What an happy inſtance! And how fortunate the Papiſts in meeting with ſo acute an advocate!

V. However, I make little doubt but he will bring off *Charles* and *Ferdinand* as nimbly as he hath acquitted *Sigiſmund* in the affair of *John Huſs*'s ſafe conduct,

duct, whom he hath proved to be, if not an orthodox Papiſt, a very great knave. His account of the ſafe-conduct itſelf, is taken from the *modeſt* and *veracious* hiſtorian, the Jeſuit *Maimbourg*, who hath very ingeniouſly *added* the *conditions* mentioned by our *Real Seeker*, to the plain words of the *ſafe conduct*, which expreſsly ſtipulates, that *Huſs* ſhould be ſuffered *freely and ſecurely to paſs, ſojourn, ſtop and repaſs*, as appears by a literal tranſlation of the original inſtrument in Mr. *L'Enfant*'s hiſtory; who hath likewiſe well expoſed the falſehood and impudence of the Jeſuit above-named. But what is ſtill worſe, for our *Real Seeker*, another popiſh hiſtorian, *Varillas*, not ſatisfied with *Maimbourg*'s account, ſplits the ſafe-conduct into *two*, thereby, as the excellent hiſtorian above mentioned obſerves, making the council guilty of a *double treachery*, which however they found means to ſanctify by a ſolemn act, importing, that *Huſs an Heretic of damnable memory, obſtinately oppoſing the orthodox faith, had alienated himſelf from all conduct and privilege, nor was any faith or promiſe, either by the law of nature, or the laws of God or man to be kept towards him, in prejudice of the Catholic faith.* Which laſt clauſe, I would, by the way, deſire a certain *Merchant* to take notice of, when he is next tempted to talk about the Papiſts keeping their faith *upon the Exchange.*

VI. Our *Seeker* deſires to know where *Alranſtad* ſtands in the map: which I will certainly tell him, if in return he will inform me where, upon the globe, I may find the *Torpics.* (thus it was ſpelt in the *Ledger*) But for anſwers to both the queſtions, I preſume, we muſt apply to your Compoſitors, who, I dare ſay, have ſenſe enough to laugh at the ſorry ſhifts to which the *Real Seeker* is reduced, even to quibbling upon errors of the preſs. But to give him all the ſatisfaction in my power,

be

be it known unto him that *Alranſtadt*, or more properly *Alt Ranſtadt*, is a village in *Upper Saxony*, not far from the plains of *Lutzen*, where a treaty of peace was concluded between *Auguſtus*, the *Catholic* king of *Poland*, and *Charles* XII. the *Heretic* king of *Sweden*, in the year 1707, whereby the former renounced all his rights to the crown and kingdom of *Poland* in favour of *Staniſlaus*, a third contracting party; but the affairs of *Auguſtus* taking ſoon after a favourable turn, he thought proper to renounce the treaty, with ſomewhat more alacrity than he had ratified it. But the miſchief was, there was an *oath* in the caſe, and ſome of the *Poles* were a little ſcrupulous in returning to their obedience to a king who ſhould lay a ſolemn ſanction of that kind out of the queſtion.

VII. " Application was therefore made to the " court of *Rome*, to releaſe the king from the ob- " ligations contracted by the treaty of *Alt Ranſtadt*. " A few of the more tender conſciences might be " hurt with ſeeing him re-aſſume, without ſcruple, " that diadem which he had ſolemnly renounced, " and confirmed, by the moſt ſacred obligations, " to another. The Pontiff's abſolving power " would apply remedies to be found *neither in po-* " *licy nor human reaſon. The Nuncio granted the ab-* " *ſolution required, and all good Catholics were then* " *unanimous that the oaths taken by Auguſtus were* " *of no ſignification.*" Mod. Univ. Hiſt. 8vo. vol. 34. p. 387. The *abſolving* Pontiff was *Clement* XI: who played other pranks of the ſame ſort a few years after, in conſequence of the *dogma* eſpouſed *unanimouſly* by all *good Catholics*, that no bonds, though ever ſo ſacred, can ſtand before the *abſolving* power of the ſovereign Pontiff. A pretty ſort of people to be *tolerated* in a Proteſtant government!---A *toleration* well worthy the patronage of that *meek*, *liberal*, *upright*, *knowing Merchant*, in

your *Ledger* of *Saturday July* 19th, who in the midſt of his zeal for *toleration*, has unwarily dropped certain *menaces* againſt ſomebody which makes a diſcovery too premature, as I ſhould think, for his future purpoſes, as well as of ſome diſagreement in his *principles* with his foregoing *profeſſions*. I preſume enough has been ſaid above to ſhew, that the *abſolving* power of the pope is the univerſal *dogma* of all good Catholics: and I will farther preſume, that the *Real Seeker* himſelf will not venture to *renounce* it. But this *abſolving* power, particularly in caſes of *reſervation*, is built immediately upon the doctrine of *infallibility*, which is conſequently an invariable *dogma* with every *good Catholic* in Europe.

VIII. As he only granted, *for argument ſake*, that the majority of Engliſh Papiſts have Jeſuits for their ſpiritual directors, it is to be hoped he will now openly affirm, that *they have not*, after which we will talk with him farther about the credit due to that *dogma*. Since nothing but facts will ſatisfy him, concerning the pernicious doctrines and practices of the Jeſuits, I refer him to a French book, now before me, intituled *Comptes des Conſtitutions & de la Doctrine de la Societé ſe diſant de Jeſus*, containing the whole proceſs and pleadings againſt them before the parliament of Normandy, January 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 1762, where their execrable doctrines, for which they were expelled France, are exhibited from their moſt authentic books. And for what they inſtill into their penitents, I refer the *Real Seeker* to a book publiſhed in the year 1758, intituled, *Mr. Arnold's Motives for renouncing the Popiſh, and embracing the Proteſtant Religion*; to which other evidence may be, and probably will be added in due time and place.

IX. The reſult upon the whole is, that the *Real Seeker's elaborate ſyſtematical edifice* is juſt as much

out

out of repair, as it was when he firſt began to patch it up. But the jeſt of it is, that we ought to hold it in veneration, out of reſpect to our own Proteſtant Legiſlature, becauſe forſooth, "the new-mo-"delling the abjuration oath, ſeems, according "to the public prints, to be under conſideration." And is it ſo indeed, my *real-ſeeking* friend? Does the *abjuration* oath, in its preſent form, pinch you? The ſecret is now diſcovered. You would willingly ſwear allegiance to his majeſty king *George* III. provided room were left for a *reſervation of allegiance* to the *popiſh Pretender* to his crown, which the oath of abjuration in its preſent form, will not admit of. How unlucky, that this pragmatical cloven foot of Jeſuitiſm cannot, with all your art and ſkill, be kept out of ſight? That a new form of the abjuration oath may indeed be under conſideration is credible enough, as there ſeems to be ſome impropriety in abjuring the title and pretenſions of a dead man to any earthly heritage. But there is no fear the Legiſlature ſhould forget that he has left a living repreſentative, who by a certain adventure about twenty years ago, as well as by ſome later tranſactions, has ſufficiently convinced us, that he eſpouſes the ſame *pretenſions* that his father did.

X. I may now hope to hear no more of *unfairneſs* and *diſingenuity* from this *Real Seeker*. I have quoted chapter and verſe for the authorities he hath demanded. If he is what he pretends to be, he will thank me for giving him the information he ſeemed to want. But if he only puts on the maſk of a *Seeker* to give himſelf a better chance for turning reaſon and common ſenſe out of their proper channels, the diſcerning and inſulted public, will give him the proper name which ſuch

mean and ſcandalous attempts will always deſerve.

I am, ſir, &c.

A Lover of Sincerity.

P. S. The *Real Seeker* talks of ſending you his ſcruples, *when he has got rid of the preſent debate.* It would, perhaps, be more adviſable for him to go on, without any regard to the preſent debate, leſt in endeavouring to diſentangle his ſyſtem by ſhifting his ground, *the latter end of his commonwealth ſhould forget the beginning.*

*** *We imagine, from circumſtances, that the object of this Correſpondent's lines, addreſſed to ourſelves, cannot be worthy of attention.*

For the Public Ledger, *Auguſt* 2.

Some remarks on the ſeventh letter of the Real Seeker, July 26, (51. I.) 1766, *addreſſed to the public by* Anti-papiſta.

I. THE readers of the *Public Ledger* might, perhaps, obſerve, that in remarking on a letter by a *Merchant*, of the ſame date with the *Real Seeker*'s ſeventh letter, I acknowledged, in a P. S. that I had nothing farther to offer againſt the ſcheme of tolerating Popery, except that of its infernal diabolical "principle, which aſſumes the power of puniſhing for conſcience ſake! the arrogant ſuperiority that claims a right of puniſhing men for thinking!" It will not therefore be the deſign of this addreſs, to reaſſume that argument, but

but to lay open the wild and indigeſted notions of a *Real Seeker*, as he is pleaſed to ſtile himſelf, tho' I am perſuaded it is a miſnomen. He does not appear to me, to have his church notions to gather up where he can find them. Theſe he has long had in full poſſeſſion. If therefore he has not miſcalled himſelf, he is rather a *Real Seeker* how he may catch prey, and delude the unwary into the ſnare he would lay for them. In order to render palatable the *ſupremacy of an earthly guide*, he ſophiſtically reaſoneth: In turning over the new teſtament, I find a text that ſays, the church "is to be proof againſt the gates of hell; which to me, without ſuch a guide, were like impoſſible; for what is a church but a body of people, profeſſing the ſame tenets of faith, and obſerving the ſame rites in the worſhip of God. Now the reading of the ſcripture may furniſh one with a ſort of religion which doth not exactly agree with any eſtabliſhed ſyſtem in the world, either as to articles of faith, or forms of worſhip; therefore this lecture is inſufficient, and ſomething elſe muſt be neceſſary for perpetuating the church, by enabling her to withſtand hell-gates; now what can this be unleſs this earthly guide?"

II. Here lies the ſophiſtical reaſoning of the Jeſuit, or artful Prieſt. But who does not ſee that the definition of a church, is coined at the VATICAN? a definition that determines all to be Heretics or Schiſmatics, who do not conduct their worſhip upon her principles and forms. I would however aſk him, whether in turning over his new teſtament, he could either find any of her tenets of faith, or any of her rites of worſhip there? but if it is proveable, that neither he nor any man elſe, ever had or ever can ſhew, that her tenets of faith or her rites of worſhip have any countenance in the new teſtament-writings, then the Romiſh church

is as likely to be eſteemed heretical and ſchiſmatical, in the judgment of the heavenly maſter, as any body of people can poſſibly be. Let the *Real Seeker* tell us, whether he did not find, in turning over the new teſtament, that Jeſus Chriſt did expreſsly forbid all his diſciples, "calling any man "MASTER on earth, becauſe one was their MASTER, "even himſelf, and all they were brethren?" in what then does he build the ſupremacy of an earthly guide?

III. I ſhall preſume to tell him, that his definition of the *church*, is a very miſtaken and erroneous one; for it never did, nor ever can conſiſt of a body of people, profeſſing the ſame tenets of faith, and obſerving the ſame rites in the worſhip of God. It did not in the apoſtles time, for ſome members of the chriſtian church believed, "that they might eat all things: others would only eat herbs. Some eſteemed one day above another: others eſteemed every day alike. Some obſerved part of the Moſaic ritual: others rejected the whole of it."

IV. And pray, what is the apoſtolic rule, in this caſe? "Let every man be perſuaded in his own mind." This is a fair account of the chriſtian church, in its primitive apoſtolical ſtate; and therefore the *Real Seeker* has turned over his new teſtament to very little purpoſe, in order to find out the true definition of a church. The church of Chriſt is built upon TRUTH and LIBERTY. Every one is a genuine member of that church, who forms a judgment for himſelf of the divine rule, in all matters of faith and worſhip; whereas every man, who is an implicit follower of any earthly guide whatſoever, has "his faith exiſting only in the wiſdom of men, but not in the power of God." Such cannot make any part of the church of Chriſt, nor be members of his myſtical body; becauſe they

they own another head, they call another man maſter. It is therefore indiſputably plain, that the communion or body of people, who acknowledge the ſupremacy of an earthly guide, have relinquiſhed the foundation which Jeſus Chriſt has laid, and on which only his church can be built. "Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid," and conſequently, all church eſtabliſhments in the world, of civil inſtitution, are quite different things from genuine chriſtianity. It will be no manner of inconvenience, or of injury, or of peril to any man, that by reading the ſcripture, he is furniſhed with a ſort of religion, that does not exactly agree with any eſtabliſhed ſyſtem in the world. So far from it, he will have the divine ſatisfaction of knowing, that he has built only upon the one foundation which has been laid by Chriſt Jeſus, himſelf, and publiſhed by his apoſtles. To proceed,

V. It is extremely idle in the *Real Seeker* to talk "of the overſeers of the church binding and looſing on earth, what will be ratified in heaven." he might eaſily have ſeen, had he not been blind, that this declaration of our Lord to his apoſtles, could only refer to thoſe terms either of acceptance or rejection, which were contained in his own teachings, and which they were to publiſh to the world. "By making manifeſt the ſavor of his knowledge in every place, they became unto God a ſweet ſavor of Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh; to the one, the ſavor of death unto death, and to the other, the ſavor of life unto life." But how was it, that they became of ſuch vaſt importance to mankind? why thus, from their uprightneſs and religious care to deliver to the world what inſtructions they had received by divine revelation; for, ſays St. *Paul*, "we are not as many (*falſe apoſtles are*) who compromize or corrupt the

word of God, but as of ſincerity; but as of God in the ſight of God ſpeak we in Chriſt." He denies "that he had any ſufficiency of himſelf, to think any thing as of himſelf, but his ſufficiency was of God, who made him an able miniſter of the new teſtament." Nay, he ſays this in the firſt perſon plural, which will include all the other genuine apoſtles. Thus evident is it, that the *power of binding and looſing* was never perſonal, but did wholly reſide in, and reſult from thoſe terms of acceptance and rejection, which the bleſſed Jeſus revealed to mankind by his apoſtles: it is now only in the new teſtament.

VI. The frothy ſtuff from Lord *Herbert* and others, about the neceſſity of a judge to determine controverſies in the church as well as in civil community, will be blown away, by only obſerving, that upon the Goſpel inſtitution, there can be no need of any; becauſe every man is to form his own judgment of the ſcriptures for himſelf, and has nothing to do to judge for another. Chriſtians are ſtrictly forbidden all contentions in matters of faith and worſhip. They are not to judge one another, in things either doubtful or indifferent. But if a man has faith in this or that ritual-obſervance, he muſt have it to himſelf before God. If the *Real Seeker* is able to ſhew either a futility in theſe remarks, or an inconcluſiveneſs, it is preſumed he will not fail immediately to produce his ſtrong reaſons; if he cannot, popery will be found ſomething elſe than a Chriſtian church.

ANTI-PAPISTA.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *Auguſt* 9.

I. IF I am not miſtaken, the *Real Seeker* appeared, in one of his letters, to be much diſpleaſed with ſomebody for calling in queſtion his ſincerity; taking care at the ſame time to ſtrengthen his pretenſions to it, by freſh profeſſions of his wanting the information he ſeemed to be ſeeking in good earneſt. Drawn in by theſe appearances of his real diſtreſs, I very honeſtly offered him my beſt advice, ſuch advice as I certainly ſhould have taken myſelf in like circumſtances. He has now convinced me that he was only a *pretended Seeker*, and that he knew very well where to have full ſatisfaction concerning any doubts or ſcruples of the religious kind, before his application to the public. It now appears, by his anſwer to my letter, (51. I.) that he not only knew that an *earthly guide* was *requiſite* for the church, but that he likewiſe knew where to find him. Why would he then act ſuch a farce with the public, and pretend to aſk counſel, and to deſire a ſolution of difficulties which he did not want? if he really had any ſcruples and doubts of the religious kind, why did he not bundle them up, ſhip himſelf and his baggage on board the firſt veſſel bound for an Italian port, and make the beſt of his way from thence to Rome? The reaſon indeed is plain. He wanted company, and took the method of *real ſeeking*, by way of advertiſing for it.

II. I ſhould think, however, that a ſenſible man, before he engages in ſuch an adventure, would like to be ſatisfied of the authority of this earthly guide, or (as he calls him) this judge of the pretenſions of contending parties. I find *one* caſe in the

the New Teſtament, which ſeems to me extremely diſcouraging to any man who is inclined to take on with ſuch a guide. One *Paul* of *Tarſus*, formerly an *Overſeer of the Church*, of no little reputation, hath left it upon record, that there were in his time diverſities of religious opinions in this very church of Rome, and that diverſity of religious practice aroſe from thoſe different opinions. *Paul*, however, would not make himſelf a guide or a judge in theſe matters, but left the ſeveral parties to the direction of their own conſciences, declaring that both might be in the right, provided they believed and acted reſpectively, in conformity to what they judged was the will of God. But ſomebody or other was not of Paul's mind. He thought the *Overſeer* left the matter ſhort, and was perhaps of opinion with the *Real Seeker*, that if the controverſy was not peremptorily decided, the gates of hell muſt of courſe prevail againſt the church, and ſo took upon him the office of a pope. What ſays Paul to this pragmatical guide? Why he reprimands him for his preſumption and impertinence. *Who art thou*, ſays he, *that judgeſt another man's ſervant? Thou, who muſt ſtand before the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt*, as well as he? For my part, I have not the leaſt doubt, but that Paul, were he to come upon earth at this very time, would uſe the very ſame language to any man in the like caſe, even though his name ſhould happen to be Innocent, or Benedict, or Clement. And if even Clement himſelf ſhould pretend to talk to Paul of *binding* and *looſing*, Paul would tell him, that inſtead of being a *guide* to others, he himſelf wanted one to guide him to the meaning of thoſe expreſſions. And ſo much for an earthly guide.

III. But it ſeems, by giving this ſcope to private judgment, I have incurred the *Real Seeker*'s ſuſpicion, that I would inſinuate the *all-ſufficiency*

of

of Deiſm. Now I think I have full as much reaſon to ſuſpect him to be a Mahometan. "What "is the church, ſays he, but a body of people "profeſſing the ſame tenets of faith, and obſerv-"ing the ſame rites in the worſhip of God?" This is a complete deſcription of the Muſſelman's church, but will not do at all for the church of Chriſt, which every man of common ſenſe may ſee from the nature of the diſpenſation, could not have ſtood a year to an end upon ſo narrow a bottom. The manner in which the *Real Seeker* puts the queſtion, ſhews that uniformity in the profeſſion of the tenets of faith, and in the obſervation of the rites of worſhip, are all the ingredients he takes into his *recipe, to make a true Church*; and that theſe two are the only qualifications which appropriate the promiſe to the church, that *the gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* Upon this footing, what hinders the church of Conſtantinople from claiming the benefit of this promiſe equally with any church upon earth?

IV. There are, I know, ſome people who think that this deſcription will fit the pope's church, as well as the Mufti's. I ſhould certainly be of the ſame opinion, if the *Real Seeker* had not inſinuated in one of his letters, that certain tenets, or, as he calls them *Dogmata* of the Roman church are variable. But, however, as it does not appear by what authority he ſays this, I think *the profeſſion of the ſame tenets of faith* is the more ſtaple dogma of the two, and that the other hint was only thrown out by way of amuſement; for the gentleman could have no premeditated deſign to contradict himſelf. In every other circumſtance, the definition will equally ſuit the church of Rome and the church of Conſtantinople. The judge will be equally capable of guiding in matters of *mere profeſſion and external obſervation* in either church, as both

both theſe may be *regulated* without the leaſt regard to conſcience or conviction. For the ſame reaſon, diſſenters from either church may be corrected, and the reſpective intereſt of both churches promoted, with great propriety, by fire and ſword; for there would be no end of hereſy, if people were permitted to look into the internals of religion without the leave of the Guide.

V. I have heard indeed of Roman Catholics (not, I own, upon Britiſh ground) who would have ſome other ſimples put into the compoſition of the church, and particularly one called Sanctity. But the *Real Seeker*, in my opinion, was extremely wiſe in his generation to admit no other properties into his definition than thoſe now abovementioned. For otherwiſe the promiſe, that the gates of *Hades* ſhould not prevail againſt the church, might prove to belong to an inviſible congregation of truly ſanctified members, where neither agreement in what this *Seeker* may pleaſe to call Tenets of Faith, nor uniformity in external rites of worſhip, are required.

VI. The *Real Seeker* ſeems pretty confident, that the objections of infidels or Deiſts againſt Revelation, taken from the diviſions among chriſtians, cannot be anſwered upon proteſtant principles: can they then be anſwered upon popiſh principles? let us try. "Ye gentlemen Deiſts object to the "diſagreement among chriſtians. You are miſ-"taken. There is no ſuch thing. The diſagree-"ment is all among the heretics. If you will "go to the biſhop of Rome, he will ſet you right "in all diſputable points, and convince you, that "there is nothing in the catholic church but uni-"ty and harmony. Very well, ſay the Deiſts, and pray how has the old gentleman determined the long ſquabble about Free-will and irreſiſtible Grace? "Why truly, ſays a *Real Seeker*, we are "not

" not very clear in thoſe articles. We are in " ſomething very like a ſtate of ſuſpence on that " chapter. To be ſure they are decided---as it " were--- and after a certain manner--- But the " ſentence hath not yet come *è Cathedra.* There " are Jeſuits, and there are Dominicans, and they " are both our very good friends. There are like- " wiſe Janſeniſts, and---and---and---But it is not " yet a time for developement.--- But---heark in " your ear.---You'll be ſure to tell nobody. France, " &c. &c. &c."

VII. I am really concerned that it falls to the ſhare of my innocent and well-meant letter to put the *Real Seeker* ſo far beſide his patience. But he ſhould have conſidered, in due time, the hazards of his undertaking. Nature hath not gifted every man with an equal portion of good ſenſe. A failing in that quarter, through a little too much vanity, is pardonable enough. It is a common caſe. But it is in every man's power to be honeſt; and where a man deviates from the line of truth, and would paſs himſelf upon the world for what he is not, he has no reaſon to be angry, upon being unmaſked. It is indeed fooliſh Paſſion diſconcerts ſuch people, and diſables them from facing about. Impudence, almighty impudence, cool apathetic impudence, is the fort of the detected impoſtor. With this impenetrable frontlet, and a ſufficient ſtock of perſeverance, the moſt diſcredited writer may, in defiance of conviction, gain an advantage.--- the only advantage a baffled cauſe will admit of,--- the advantage of the laſt word.

I am, ſir, your humble ſervant,

A Real Catholic.

To

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *Auguſt 9.*

LETTER IX.

I. AFTER having begged the continuance of your indulgence, (59. II.) in caſe I diſcovered any thing in your moſt valuable paper tending to elucidate my ſcruples, I ſuppoſe I need make no apology for ſo abruptly taking up the pen I had laid down, to make way for the intemperature of a late phænomenon; eſpecially as this is occaſioned by ſome freſh animadverſions of *a lover of Sincerity*, (61. I.) and *Anti-papiſta*, (68. I.) in commending of whoſe moderation I am ſorry I have been premature, as to my great mortification I find them now waxen hot, which convinces me more and more, that it is an advantage peculiar to *real ſeekers* to be ſteadily cool, as ready to ſing the palinody as others may be to cry victory, and look upon a contrary diſpoſition as the moſt certain ſymptom either of a bad cauſe, or diſability to ſupport a good.

II. What was agitated betwixt the firſt of theſe gentlemen and me centered in this; whether Papiſts have any dogmata pernicious to government? There were only two ways, that I could ſee to prove the negative; firſt, the practice and profeſſion of avowed Papiſts, which, as to the points laid to their charge, I ſhewed to be the caſe with the Gallican church, whereof as yet, no more than of other important defences, this gentleman very ungenerouſly, nay, and unthinkingly, (as it is very poſſible one may be vanquiſhed on one ſide whilſt victorious on another) takes no manner of notice; whereas, far from thinking a ſingle point of his letter beneath mine, I ſhould be obliged to him for pointing out

any

any I might have overlooked. Secondly, a challenge given Proteſtants to produce ſuch dogmata, for which purpoſe I deſired they would diſtinguiſh betwixt dogmata and regulations of diſcipline; as, beſides *variable dogmata* and *dogmata of diſcipline*, being, as I apprehended, great improprieties in theology, I wanted we ſhould underſtand one another, which alone, I am confident would determine many a thorny and ſeemingly irreconcileable diſpute.

III. Now let us ſee how effectually he anſwers the challenge: the canons of Trent, fraught with ſuch ſhocking uncharitableneſs as to curſe thoſe that do not adhere to them, by a ſolemn anathema are, ſays he, invariable dogmata; true; but does this imply damning of folks? which was the queſtion then in hand, or rather delivering them over, as *Paul* did the inceſtuous Corinthian, unto Satan for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit might be ſaved in the day of the Lord? Now I leave thoſe to judge, who will, whether he or I be, as to this, the beſt thiſtle-mumbler.

IV. If he had ſhewn, as it was required of him, where the Baptiſts have expreſsly renounced the turbulency of their forefathers, I fancy it would be no hard taſk to get Papiſts to make a declaration, not of renouncing any former dogmata, (a miſtaken ſuppoſition he very indiſcerningly harps upon, and as unfairly with the *real Catholic* of this day (75.IV.) would father upon me, without ſaying when or where I have made it) but thoſe diſcipline rules which experience has ſhewn to be productive of more evil than good; nor do I ſee the cry of a rabble could in reaſon be alledged as an indication that the thing were impracticable. What with the long poſſeſſion of their faith's predominancy, their pre-poſſeſſion of its being of a divine original, and the only one to be ſaved in, and eſpe-

cially

cially their apprehenſion, which experience proves to be but too well grounded, of endangering the public tranquility, by the admiſſion of more than one in the ſtate (See 1. 11. 7.) it is not to be wondered at that papiſts ever labour to put the negative upon all others, without however declaring as of faith, that their own ſyſtem is the only allowable; nor do I think one, who would ſwear after a variable principle of his religion has been retracted, ſhould be credited, if, what was above ſuggeſted (30.I.) an oath againſt a papiſt's invariably inherent principles ſhould not.

V. Had the intolerance been a popiſh dogma, the pacification treaties could, under never ſo great conſtraints, have no more been warrantably ſigned by thoſe emperors, than an idol cenſed by the primitive martyrs. Whether the popiſh contracting parties have ever had it in their power to prevaricate to any purpoſe, is but a collateral point: I indulge him, *ex abundanti*, the more as its diſcuſſion might carry us ſo far as to miſs the right end of our clue, what, he judiciouſly remarks in his poſtſcript, is to be apprehended in long-winded diſputations: now the direct point were to ſhew where the intolerance was made a popiſh dogma; they might indeed not have had it in their power to beat proteſtants out of the field and demoliſh their temples, but ſure they at firſt might not have ſigned the treaties, and afterwards might have cancelled their ſignature; the doing that, and omitting this, would then have rendered them hereties, had the intolerance been dogmatical.

VI. This is the caſe with the ſafe-conduct, it is but an incidental point, the ecclairciſement (for which he has my beſt thanks) I wanted; not for the ſake of bringing off Sigiſmundus, the council, or even Clement. I am well aware no man or body of men, however ſacred, is exempt from groſs miſtakes

takes and perſonal failures, and that it is next to impoſſible they ſhould be otherwiſe, whilſt made of fleſh and blood: my view was to ſee if I could pick out of thoſe procedures any thing like a dogma, binding Papiſts to believe the council or pope inveſted with a power of diſpenſing with oaths even prejudicial to the catholic faith.

VII. This gentleman ſhews indeed the thing to have been done, but if dogmatically, ſo as that this power muſt be believed like any article of the creed, is what I cannot collect from the extract he gives of the council's ſolemn act, which is as follows: "Huſs, an Heretick of damnable memory, obſtinately oppoſing the orthodox faith, had alienated himſelf from all conduct and privilege; nor was any faith or promiſe either by the law of nature, or the laws of God or man to be kept towards him, in prejudice of the Catholic faith." Here there is no injunction of believing this, nor cenſure of the oppoſite tenet or its abettors for hereſy, which are the characteriſticks of a dogma; and indeed, to weigh things impartially, far from canoniſing a power deſtructive of all ſociety, it muſt have been the extravagance of their zeal and vanity of juſtifying at all events what they had done, that made them pronounce a diſregard for a promiſe which the very Jews would have held as ſacred. Joſh. ix. 19. But what evinces the church of Rome never looked upon this act of the council in a dogmatical light is, that that of Trent (Seſ. 15) has ſuperceded it for that time, which it had never attempted, had it been a rule of faith; who could believe that any church could oblige us to believe, but for a moment, for inſtance, that Chriſt was not the ranſomer of mankind?

VIII. The ſame anſwer is made to what is ſaid of Clement the eleventh; it is true, he got his Nuncio to abſolve Auguſtus from his promiſe, but

never declared, that "all good Catholics were then unanimous, that the oaths taken by him were of no ſignification:" theſe being the words of the Mod. Uni. Hiſ. whoſe authors of courſe have thus far tranſcended the bounds preſcribed to hiſtorians of relating genuine facts without any remarks of their own, nor do I ſee that it is at all unlikely the Ruſſian canon might have had as great a ſhare in this credulity, if true, as the Clementine. But allowing thoſe to have been the pope's words, is it certain that all good Catholics are never unanimous but in what they hold as dogmatical?

IX. I would not inſiſt, that the council did not think themſelves in duty bound to fulfill the engagements of Sigiſmund, entered upon to the prejudice of their pretended right, nor that Auguſtus, his oath, having been extorted by Charles the Twelfth, might be looked upon as void; I only ſay, it does not appear to me, that there is a dogma in either caſe: if we erect all the deciſions of popes and councils into dogmata, there will be no end of them; beſides numberleſs other examples, did Paul the Fourth not declare the ceſſion made of the empire by Charles the Fifth, in favour of his brother Ferdinand, void without his conſent? alledging for reaſon, that he had the keys of the empire of heaven and earth? yet who could think this a dogma, when upon the demiſe of the imperial crown popes were never ſince conſulted?

X. As to the Jeſuits, if I have not undertaken the patronage of councils or popes, it cannot be expected I ſhall theirs. I therefore leave them and penitents, if found guilty, to the mercy of the law, but would have no innocent perſon, on pretence of a common dogma, ſhare in their fate. So

little

little am I bigotted to them, however juſtly learned reputed, that I have never ſeen Maimburg's works upon this ſubject, and have read more of the Jeſuit's books with Proteſtant's eyes than my own: nor do I think a conformity of ideas ſhould prove the contrary, as they might be derived, not one from the other, but both from the nature of the thing, juſt as different accountants, working ſeparately the ſame queſtion in arithmetick, bring in the ſame reſult: but, on my own behalf muſt inſiſt, the conſequence of my being of the cloven-footed kind, from ſaying, the new-modelling of the oath of abjuration, was, from the public prints, under conſideration, is unfair; however would be obliged to this gentleman to let me know, whence the epithet, *cloven-footed* firſt ſprung, that I may do myſelf juſtice, by diſclaiming whatever I find implied thereby, not ſquaring with my real principles; and likewiſe if I may depend upon his intelligence, that the oath is to be new-modelled after his manner and not ſuch another as mine? (See 19. IX.) or why may this not poſſibly be the caſe? and that in favour of ſome good Proteſtants who are as (not to ſay much more) religiouſly attached to their political dogms of h---r---- and j---d--- than Papiſts ever have been? (See 2. 3. 80.) inſomuch that they look upon papiſtical w---s as very monſters, and their apologiſts as pariſitical ſycophants, for owning that they reſt each one ſecurely under his own fig-tree and vine: whilſt, beſides other hardſhips, the fruits of the few they ſtill enjoy are doubly tithed, and infine, why the *real Freethinker* ſhould not have the ſame right of ranking me for oppoſing his arguments, (22. VI. &c.) amongſt the uncloven-footed kind?

XI. And now, Mr. Printer, having reduced this important debate to this ſingle queſtion; what

is meant by a dogma? I decline any farther purſuit, this being the province of theological etymologiſts, to whom I therefore appeal.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

P. S. This letter being already of a tolerable length makes me poſtpone an anſwer to *Antipapiſta* for the preſent, nay I have better than half a mind to paſs it by unnoticed. Had I not hopes that time would work your correſpondents into better humour, the teſtineſs of theſe two laſt letters would determine me to bid them an eternal adieu, the conſequence of which muſt be to be gnawed to death by my ſcruples, unleſs I ſhould take ſome other method of clearing them up. It is a pity, Mr. Printer, that thoſe gentlemen, poſſeſſed of ſo eminent a degree of benevolence, the only incentive, I preſume, to their productions, ſhould not conſider, what ſo much enhances the merit of our actions, that a favour is doubly ſuch, when done with a good grace.

*** *We muſt take the liberty to wiſh a diſcontinuance of this ſubject; as nothing can be more evident, than that this Gentleman is not ſo ignorant as to need making application in this manner for the removal of his ſcruples, if any ſuch he really has.*

LETTER X.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *Auguſt* 16.

I. NOW, Mr. Printer, I am compleatly diſconcerted; after your wiſhing this ſubject

ject were discontinued, I should be for ever silent, was it not that I thought myself warranted to clear up my character with you especially, in whose eyes, above all men, I should be extremely sorry to be obnoxious. I am traduced as an impostor, to be nothing less than what I pretend; instead of a scrupulous seeker to be but a prowler after prey, &c. which charges, so far as I can find, are built first upon my not tamely acquiescing in the dictates of your correspondents, and secondly, on my not seeming ignorant enough to be at a loss how to remove my scruples, in case I had any.

II. I would only ask, if the government's withholding the whole premium offered for the discovery of the longitude from the authors of the many schemes proposed hitherto, should be reckoned a proof that it entertains no doubt about it? and if it is not a plain case, there are more disorders proceeding from the indigestion of an over-loaded stomach than its emptiness? Now as it appears from my first letter, of the 10th of May (10.III.) that this indigestion is my case, it is to be hoped (altho' the request should be ascribed to an *impenetrable frontlet of cool apathetic impudence*) you will condescend for the last time (unless your correspondents should agree to a continuation) to insert the following doubts relative to their two last letters, the one of *Anti-papista*, the other of *a real Catholic*, that of the 2d, (68. I.) this of the 9th (73. I.) instant.

III. Whether the first acts an honourable part in abandoning his own cause, to be pleaded by *a Lover of Sincerity*, whilst he espouses that of the second, is not material to my present purpose; but much so, to know how he could be reconciled to the intolerance of popery, for its assuming the power of punishing for conscience sake, when I have all along endeavoured to shew the penal

laws in the caſe; it is baſe to make that an exception to another, which is one's own caſe, without ſhewing the difference: which act with leſs conſiſtency herein, the Papiſts or Proteſtants, may appear from the ſolution of the following query. A, on pretence of ſome divine or at leaſt immemorially preſcribed ſuperiority, has kept B a long time under the hatches, by always clapping a piſtol to his breaſt. B gives A a challenge at the ſmall ſword, which with much difficulty A accepts: When arrived at the place appointed, B makes A beg his life, by clapping a piſtol to his breaſt. Query, which ſhews leſs of the gentleman? I need not ſay, that by piſtol I here would mean the inquiſition and other tyrannical proceedings of Rome, and by the ſmall ſword a fair and diſpaſſionate trial, for the thing ſpeaks of itſelf. Nor can B, by way of making repriſals, be juſtified herein; as the ſword had been his own propoſal: ſtipulations ſhould be ever inviolable: and thus is obviated the vulgar objection, that they who give no quarter ſhould expect none, for beſides this, a difference ſhould ever be made between a fair *uſucaption* and a new forcibly obtained poſſeſſion. (See 2. 4. 32.)

IV. But the neceſſity of an earthly guide is what galls him moſt, ſo great is his averſion thereto, that he rejects my definition of a church; altho' it ſo coincides, as to this, with that of the 19th article of religion, viz. *A congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached*, &c. that I might ſubſtitute the one for the other, purity and lameneſs of faith being equally indiviſible, though I cannot ſee what good end, as to uniting chriſtians, a church errable in faith, which there is ſaid to be the caſe of all churches, could anſwer.

V. He ſays, the definition of the church is coined at the Vatican, where all are determined to be heretics or ſchiſmatics, who do not conduct their

their worſhip upon Rome's principles: True, but this is done by adding *under the pope* to my definition, which may be adapted to any ſpiritually united congregation of people, whoſe unity I only here pretend could not be long preſerved without ſome earthly guide, without determining this ſhould be the council, convocation, or pope; which ſhould be remarked by *a real Catholic.* (See 74.III.&c.)And really a church to be durable without ſuch a guide, would ſeem to me not leſs chimerical than Plato's common-wealth, or the Stoik's perfect man. Sure he could not imagine, I meant to give a compleat definition of the church: (See 3. 12. 46 and 8. 2. 42.) it is true I have made uſe of theſe expreſſions, *what is the church but*, &c. but a ſmall ſhare of candour would have conſtrued them into theſe, *is the church not*, which are not excluſive of ſpecifical ingredients: I only mentioned ſuch as were for my purpoſe; his quarrelling then with me for omitting ſome, ſhews how ready he would be for what the Frenchman calls *battre la campagne*: (See 4. 2. 131.) the unity of Chriſt's church was the only point in debate: why then ſhould he attempt to bewilder and carry us (like a pack of babbling young hounds, ſo apt to miſtake their prey) to its ſanctity, to the Mahometan and Conſtantinople churches, which any one that believes the three creeds, litany, and thirty-nine articles, muſt hold to have broken the unity with Rome and even Proteſtants? (See 2. 2. 72.) and whoſe unity within themſelves, if true, (See 3.15.35, and 8. 4. 51.) may be as much the effect of conviction in conſequence of the verdict of an earthly guide as of fire and ſword? or after all would he undertake to prove, Rome has not hitherto upheld her unity by eſſentially varying her creed or ſacramental rites? and conſequently, that the definition is incompleat, as not ſpecifical enough to

diſtinguiſh her from all other churches? or is his inſiſting upon the ſanctity of an inviſible church's members, of however different perſuaſions, not a ſtrong indication of his Latitudinarian principles?

VI. *Anti-papiſta* ſays, neither I or any body elſe can ſhew any of Rome's peculiar tenets countenanced in the New Teſtament. Let him ſingle out the point, bid me defiance, and he may depend upon my ſending him my ſcruples.

VII. He ſays, the diſciples were forbidden to call any one maſter on earth, becauſe one was their maſter. But is it not ſaid in the Revelations, God only is holy? What then muſt we build the new birth upon? ſhould he ſay, this righteouſneſs is imputative, I ſhall tell him, the maſterſhip is derivative; now where is the odds? But what is ſurpriſing is, that he could or would not ſee, that in the very place whence he borrows this objection, there is a prohibition of calling any one father on earth, and yet, that in England there are ſo many *fathers in God.*

VIII. To prove the church needs not profeſs the ſame tenets of faith, he agrees with *a real Catholic*, that ſome apoſtolic men thought they could eat of all things, others would eat only herbs, ſome eſteemed one day above another, others held all days alike, ſome obſerved part of the Moſaic ritual, others rejected the whole: but no members of the church, except the ſqueamiſh Diſſenters, who fall out for ſurplice and cap, ever looked upon ſuch formalities as terms of communion: who would think that at this day, as well as under the law, one, to ſatisfy his fancy, may not be circumciſed, provided he looked upon it as a matter of indifferency, ſuch as the things here enumerated have been, as appears from the ſummary of the 14th chap. to the Romans, in our own proteſtant Bible.

Bible? But did the ſame apoſtolic men look upon all other things as indifferent? (See 2. 3. 58.)

IX. The church, he ſays, is built on truth and liberty; but the queſtion is, unleſs we could reconcile contradictions, if unreſtrained liberty, without an earthly guide, would not deſtroy truth?

X. He ſays, that acknowledging an earthly guide, is building on another foundation of civil inſtitution than what Chriſt had laid. In this he were right, could no warrant be produced for making this inſtitution divine, and ſuch I fancy, may be produced, as cannot eaſily be allegorized away. Nor do I ſee that the conſtituting a judge any more in religious than civil controverſies, could, even without a warrant from ſcripture, be conſtrued into a laying another foundation than Chriſt: eſpecially as by the foundation here ſpoken of, is meant not an earthly guide, but a redeemer of mankind. (1 Cor. i. 13.)

XI. He ſays, it is idle in me to talk of a power of binding and looſing; whereas I might ſee, if not blind, that this declaration could refer but to thoſe terms either of acceptance or rejection, which were contained in Chriſt's own teachings; and they were to publiſh to the world; by making manifeſt the ſavor of his knowledge every where, they became unto God "a ſweet ſavor of Chriſt in them that are ſaved, and in them that periſh, to the one a ſavor of death unto death, and to the others a ſavor of life unto life."

XII. I do not at all doubt, Mr. Printer, but this gentleman means well; but muſt confeſs, if I gave attention to any parſon holding forth in this ſtrain, I ſhould look upon myſelf in as bad a light as ſome do upon Papiſts, who thump their craws without knowing a word of what is ſaid: What! to bind and looſe was only to tell people what they

were

were to do, (the moſt I can make of this ſeemingly godly, but enigmatical gibberiſh) Paul's commiſſion to Damaſcus implied ſomething more, and ſo does that of a judge going on the circuit, though not expreſſed in ſtronger terms than Chriſt's; and in the name of wonder, who could think that a ſavor of death unto death, and life unto life, could in the noſtrils of God or man, as here is expreſſed, be equally ſweet? and were it allowed to allegorize away ſuch palpably obvious texts as theſe, the conſequence would be fatal both to the Chriſtian and Moſaic ſyſtems: has Bazilides not pretended Chriſt's humanity was only phantaſtical? the Alcoran, that not he, but another was crucified in his ſtead? Woolſton, that his miracles were all deluſions? and to enumerate no more, lord Bolinbroke, that the wonders recorded in the Old Teſtament cannot be more juſtly compared than to the legerdemains of a puppet-ſhow, or the enchantments of a fairy-land? and pray why may theſe reveries not be as well grounded as this gentleman's? That I ſhould not appear ſingular in my opinion, nor the only ſophiſtically *blind* herein, I ſhould be obliged to any gentleman who takes in the Critical Review, to examine and let me know, through the channel of your paper, if about four or five years ſince, there was not a pamphlet written in this ſtrain, reckoned unintelligible by the authors thereof.

XIII. If his meaning is that binding and looſing imply no more than heaven's approving ſuch as with gladneſs ſhould receive the happy tidings, and diſproving ſuch as ſhould ſpurn at them; beſides no mention being made (Mat. xviii. 18.) as (Mark xvi. 15.) *of teachings*, but only of fraternal correction, where he, who is deaf to the voice of the church is ordered to be held as a heathen and publican, and that, as it immediately follows, the

judg-

judgment will be ratified in heaven; the expreſſion were idle: for who could imagine that people's acquieſcence to the voice of any ſubſtitute, could be otherwiſe than agreeable, or their wilfulneſs than diſagreeable to the ſubſtituent? moreover, contrary to the expreſs words of the text, they are the people, who, according to his interpretation, would bind and looſe themſelves, and not the church overſeers. But without entering into a further detail of the meaning of theſe powers, I would only aſk, which I am to believe, *Anti-papiſta* or the eſtabliſhed church, whoſe ſyſtem as to this coincides with that of Rome? (See art. 33 of rel. and 2. 9. 46.) or is this query not the ſource of my perplexity? (See 10. III.)

XIV. The frothy ſtuff, I borrow from lord Herbert, he treats with the utmoſt contempt; becauſe every one is to form his own judgment, and have his own faith to himſelf before God, without judging for another, eſpecially as chriſtians are forbidden all manner of contention in matters of faith and worſhip: But it is ſurpriſing this gentleman and *Chriſtianus* of laſt Thurſday, have not conſidered all theſe fine things do not prove the needleſſneſs of a judge in the ſtate? why then ſhould they in the church? Are contentions in matters of property not forbidden as in thoſe of faith? (1 Cor. 6. 7.) Or muſt there be no judge or avenger of ſin, becauſe it is forbidden?

XV. It was not for giving a reaſonable ſcope to private judgment, that I ſuſpected *a real Catholic* of Deiſm, but for ſuch a tranſcendent one, as would aſſociate a man with Turks, Jews, and Infidels; as to the preceptive part of the goſpel, making it at the ſame time a matter of indifference that he profeſſed and worſhipped in his cloſet, and apart from every viſible congregation he knew of. And indeed this appears to me as univocal

vocal a ſymptom of Deiſm as any *Chub* ever diſcovered, nay the notion ſeems to have been borrowed from him. See (9. 6. 87.) And after all, is he not to be a Deiſt becauſe I may be a Turk? or does he think recrimination will in any court diſcharge an impeachment?

XVI. The undecided ſtate of the ſquabble about free will and irreſiſtable grace proves not any want of harmony in that church, whoſe members are ever under command, but that there are ſome goſpel-truths unfathomable: Whether this was the caſe with the Gomariſts and Arminians, for inſtance, even after the ſynod of Dort, I leave him to judge. (See 2. 5. 6. and 3. 7. 32.) One thing I am pretty ſure of is, that *heark in your ear*, and other ſuch funny expreſſions awkwardly derived from the facetious lord Shaftſbury, will never evince his point. (See 9. 3. 91.)

XVII. As to his advice for bundling up my ſcruples and ſhipping them off for Italy, it will be time enough when I ſhall have it from better authority, that there is no prophet in Iſrael to get them reſolved by; and indeed, like the phyſician's preſcription of the country-air after all his ſkill in pharmacy has been baffled, this ſeems to be the laſt reſort of a deſperate cauſe: his pretenſions to having unmaſked the farce I act with the public, are as vain as the groundleſs charge of Jacobitiſm brought by courtiers againſt ſuch as are in the oppoſition, or of Janſeniſm, charged upon ſuch as are not partizans of Moliniſts: he muſt therefore go about making this out, not in a vulgar but ſcientifical way, by anſwering the above queries, (o. 2.) before he can expect the impeachment to be acquitted from ſlander and obloquy. To me it appears in the ſame light as that of Chriſt by the Jews; (Luke xxiii. 5.) nay in a worſe, as he would pretend to ſound the very motive of my conduct;

nor

nor do I think the harmony of him and brethren on the occaſion, and their inſinuations to the Printer, may not be paralelled in the ſame remarkable tranſaction. (See 2. 5. 15. Luke xxiii. 12. and John xix 12.) And ſuppoſing I were of the cloven-footed kind, ſhould they, who ſet up for religious champions, not be aſhamed in a country ſo renowned for fair-play, to avail themſelves of the laws in order to decline entering the liſts for a trial, not of manhood, but who is likelieſt, by dint of argument to make moſt proſelytes, a Papiſt or Proteſtant; one thing I am pretty well convinced of is, that of the two he is the greateſt farce-player, as the moſt hardened of Papiſts, a Jeſuit, may be a *Real Seeker*, whereas real Catholiciſm is, to my thinking, irreconcileably contrary to enthuſiaſm. Infine, as to my having no other advantage in this cauſe than that of a baffled one, *the laſt word*, I am ſo far from making any pretenſions even to the ſame, that tho' I reſolve never to trouble the Printer again with my ſcruples, yet I ſhall not take it amiſs ſhould he uſe all poſſible indulgence in his regard; as, altho' ſilent, I may benefit of his leſſons, which, whatever he may think to the contrary, was my original view; but after all what is this to our purpoſe? or is it philoſopher like, to carry us at every turn to loſe ſight of what is in debate?

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

P. S. I ſhould be much obliged to you for giving this letter a place; I ſhall not, however, impeach your impartiality, if, for reaſons beſt known to yourſelf, you ſhould refuſe the favour.

*** *We have complied with this Correſpondent's requeſt for this once; and have to ſay, that diſputes of this kind are improper for a News-*

a News-Paper. The Public remark, and it may elſewhere be decided, that the end of this Correſpondent in propoſing his ſcruples, cannot be the obtaining ſolutions of his own doubts, but the ariſing of them in others. Beſides there can be no end of diſputes of ſuch a nature, carried on in ſuch a manner; and therefore they muſt prove highly offenſive to ſome, and diſpleaſing to many more of our Readers. Will this Gentleman own he has received any ſatisfactory ſolutions of his doubts already propoſed? and if not, what end can be anſwered by his propoſing any more, except that which his opponents ſuppoſe, the creating of them in others? But to what uſe then does he endeavour to put our Paper, but one for which we muſt become liable to be made anſwerable to the Laws of our Country? and that is an evil to which we do not chuſe to ſubject ourſelves, for the ſake of complying with any unreaſonable claims that may be made on our impartiality.

Theſe ten letters are the only I have hitherto wrote. As to the firſt query propoſed in theſe Italicks, I am ſorry to ſay I muſt anſwer it in the negative; but does it follow, it would never be otherwiſe, even were I allowed to continue? or is it poſſible I could get ſatisfaction in the way of argument? if ſo: what more promiſing method could there be thereof, than thro' this or ſuch another channel? (See 9. 1.) if not, it muſt be had in a judicial way, or farewell all reſearches: I am far from blaming the Printer for conſulting his own ſecurity, but whatever it may be with endangering it, or diſcouraging religious diſquiſitions, (See 2. 3. 68.) a neglect of ſeeking under a doubt I can by no means exculpate; nor, as has been obſerved, (23. VII.) are ſuch thwarting meaſures ſo apt to damp as whet inquiſitive geniuſes.

After having ſubjoined a few more letters taken from the *Ledger* of the ſame year with the ſcruples I entertain concerning their ſubject, I ſhall conclude this pamphlet with one to a gentleman for his chriſtmaſs-box, for which he has not had the gratitude to thank me, or even expreſs his diſlike of my well-meant, though perhaps not ſo taken, preſent.

To

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *March* 1.

POPERY *and* INFIDELITY *united*; Archbiſhop Tillotſon's *Reaſon for oppoſing Popery.*

I. HOWEVER paradoxical the title of this letter, and however alarming to ſome of the unbelieving tribes, who fancy themſelves the avowed friends of liberty, there certainly will be found in their ſcheme, a very favourable aſpect on Popery. It has long been my opinion, that infidelity and Popery will ſtand or fall together. In reading over Dr. *Gregory Sharp's want of univerſality no objection to the truth of the Chriſtian Religion*, I had the pleaſure of finding that learned and free writer of the ſame opinion: and ſhall take the liberty of making from him the following citation. "The Catholic, as he is falſely called, and the Infidel unite in many particulars, and the buſineſs of the former is often carried on by the latter, *e. g.* The Infidel ſays, if chriſtianity is not univerſal it cannot be true.---The Papiſt ſays, if you are not a Catholic you cannot be ſaved.---Again, the Catholic requires infallibility, as an eſſential qualification in the guide, who is to lead to religion and happineſs.---The Infidel aſſumes and applauds the ſame principle, and fondly inveſts himſelf with ſuch extenſive and ſagacious powers of reaſon, as ſhall exempt him from a poſſibility of error in matters of religion, and render the aids of revelation altogether needleſs and impertinent."

II. Again, a ſervile ſubmiſſion to the uſurped domination of the Popiſh hierarchy, will eaſily atone for the vices of a criminal indulgence.---At

the

the ſame time the Infidel imagines himſelf undeſerving reproach, he is abandoned to the proſecution of ſuch lawleſs pleaſures which infatuate the mind, debaſe its dignity, and diſqualify to an immortal happineſs." Farther, "The Catholic exhibits ſuch a deſcription of the moral character of G, as is abſolutely repugnant to his eſſential perfections.---So the Infidel aſcribes to God ſuch properties and powers as are deſtructive of wiſe goodneſs."

III. This inſeparable connexion of Popery and infidelity, and their reciprocal ſupport and influence, Biſhop Burnet has finely repreſented in his account of Archbiſhop Tillotſon. "He ſaw, with deep regret, the fatal corruption of the age, while the hypocriſies and extravagancies of former times, and the liberties and looſeneſs of the preſent, diſpoſed many to Atheiſm and impiety. He therefore went far into this matter, and as he had conſidered all the ancient and modern apologies for the chriſtian religion, with an exactneſs that became the importance of the ſubject, ſo he ſet the whole ſtrength of his thoughts and ſtudies to withſtand the progreſs that this was making.

IV. "In order to that, he laboured particularly to bring every thing out of the cleareſt principles, and to make all people feel the reaſonableneſs of the TRUTHS, as well as of the PRECEPTS of the chriſtian religion. When he ſaw that Popery was at the root of this, and that the deſign ſeemed to be laid to make us firſt ATHEISTS, that we might the more eaſily be made PAPISTS; and that many did not ſtick to own, that we could have no certainty for the chriſtian faith, unleſs we believed the infallibility of the church.---This gave him a deep and juſt indignation; it was ſuch a betraying the cauſe of G, rather than not gain their

own

own, that in this the foundation was laid of his great zeal againſt Popery,

V. "This drew his ſtudies for ſome years much that way: he looked upon the whole complex of Popery, as ſuch a corruption of the whole deſign of Chriſtianity, that he thought it was incumbent on him to ſet himſelf againſt it, with a zeal and courage which became that cauſe, and was neceſſary for thoſe times. He thought the idolatry and ſuperſtition of the church of Rome did enervate true piety and morality; and that their CRUELTY was ſuch a contradiction to the meekneſs of Chriſt, and to that love and charity which he made the character and diſtinction of his diſciples and followers, that he reſolved to ſacrifice every thing, except a good conſcience, in a cauſe for which he had reſolved, if it ſhould come to extremities, to become a ſacrifice himſelf."

VI. The above account is to be found in Biſhop Burnet's funeral ſermon for Archbiſhop Tillotſon. 1694. Quarto, p. 15, 16. The biſhop mentioning his acquaintance with the Proteſtants in France, gives us this remarkable aſſurance.--"The method that carried over the men of the fineſt parts among them to Popery, was this; they brought themſelves to *doubt of the whole Chriſtian religion*; when this was once done, it ſeemed a mere indifferent thing, of what ſide or form they continued outwardly."---See *Hiſt. of his own Times.* Firſt Edit. Fol. p. 567.

VII. Theſe are very expreſſive repreſentations of the union which ſubſiſts between infidelity and Popery. They are what may be proved from the moſt critical examination: facts, every where, illuſtrate the reaſoning.---And ſuch is my opinion of the Romiſh clergy, who have ever dared to think and enquire for themſelves, that they muſt be infidels. They cannot but ſee the horrid im-

poſition upon the reaſon and underſtanding of mankind, by the popiſh profeſſion: hence the men of genius in Italy, and thoſe of any liberal education are generally atheiſtical.

VIII. But what is moſt ſurpriſing will open to our view in the ſpread of Popery and infidelity in a Proteſtant nation, and where the evidences for the truth of Chriſtianity have been ſhewn, with the utmoſt candour and ſpirit. What can be expected from their ſpread, but the loſs of all that is dear to men, and what alone is the glory of Britons? For to the Proteſtant profeſſion of Chriſtianity has been owing all the brave defences of liberty, in every ſeaſon of public peril; and it muſt be attributed to an infatuation, that ſo many are ſecure in the advancing ſtrides of Popery. Whoever can think at all, or has made the leaſt obſervation of what has ever attended the ſpread of Popery, muſt aſſuredly know, that there LIBERTY civil and religious muſt be ſacrificed. The ſons of infidelity would do well to conſider, that where this ſacrifice is made, neither natural nor revealed religion can have place.

A TILLOTSONIAN.

LETTER XI.

To the Printer *of the* Public Ledger, *September* 20.

I. OF all the charges that could be brought againſt Popery, there is none I ſhould have ſo little ſuſpected as its affinity to infidelity: a parallel thereof with fanaticiſm and enthuſiaſm is what

what I have frequently heard made, and it is what Burnet himſelf ſuggeſts (96. III.) by his antitheſis betwixt *the hypocriſies* (an enthuſiaſtick epithet) *and extravagancies of former times, and the liberties and looſeneſs* (the characters of infidelity) *(9. 1. 59.) of the preſent:* to make then the ſimile reach to the other extream, were to attempt likening, at a time the ſame thing to oppoſite contradictions: to wit, rational free-thinking and blindly credulous bigotry; but ſo virulent is often mens ſpleen, that they muſt give it vent at the expence of their underſtanding.

II. But as it is only the compariſon of popery with infideliy, not enthuſiaſm that is here in agitation, the latter I wave, and ſay the former wears an unpromiſing aſpect, from infidelity being coeval with proteſtancy in this realm, *(9. 1. 54.)* and that the ſimile ſeems much rather to run in this way, the reſemblance of peculiarities on both ſides, being much more ſtriking. What can be ſo much ſo, as that of God's will impreſſed on our minds being alone ſufficient *(the ſpecial eſſence of Deiſm)* for leading us to happineſs with his written will, without the help of a common umpire, interpreter or even the ſenſe of antiquity *(the genuine characteriſtick of proteſtancy)* being ſo? Does the Deiſt not reject the redemption and mediation of Chriſt for the ſame reaſon as Proteſtants do the interceſſion of ſaints? *viz.* their being derogatory to God's mercy and omniſcience? where do we read any Deiſts hardy enough to dedicate and even perſonally preſent their blaſphemous productions to a popiſh potentate as Jordanus Brunus has his to Q----E----? (9. 1. 45.) and, to paſs over in ſilence many other inſtances enumerated by the Jew Apologiſt, what popiſh territory has ever given ſanctuary to ſuch notorious and irreclaimably ſteel-hardened infidels as E---and G do at this day?

III. Altho' this alone might ſuffice to ſtop the mouth of our Tillotſonian; yet, reproachful retaliations being reckoned unphiloſophical and ungenteel, it is proper we ſhould canvaſs thoſe degrees of affinity, he ſays, Dr. Gregory Sharp pretends to ſubſiſt between popery and infidelity. Some Deiſts, I own, object the want of univerſality to Chriſtianity: (9. 2. 11.) but if this be parallel to the tenet of none being ſaved out of the Catholic church, ſome Proteſtants themſelves are in the caſe. (2. 3. 49.) In what ſenſe catholiciſm is held to be a note of the true church, upon which the Dr. ſeems to lay the whole ſtreſs, may be ſeen. (8. 4. 1.) I likewiſe own, as was already obſerved, (0. 2.) that Deiſts maintain the all-ſufficiency of reaſon as a guide in religion without the help of revelation: but where is there any tenet of popery like this? is the infallibility of the church not pretended to be founded on the goſpel? or does the all-ſufficiency of ſcripture not bear as ſtrict a reſemblance to that of reaſon as the ſaid infallibility?

IV. As to the doctrine of the Catholics' ſervile ſubmiſſion to the pope's uſurpations attoning for all criminal indulgences, unleſs clearly proved, it will ever paſs with me for ſcurrilouſly ſlanderous, and ſo will the charge of their exhibiting God's moral character as repugnant to his eſſential attributes: however I am apt to think with the Jew Apologiſt, that Deiſm has a propenſity to the proſecution of lawleſs pleaſures, and is in ſome meaſure deſtructive of God's attributes. (9. 1. 15. ¦ 59. &c.) With regard to Burnet's panegyrick of Tillotſon, I ſhall look upon his eulogiums as mere bumbaſt, until ſupported by proper examples and proofs, the more as I find the Jew Apologiſt have but a ſo ſo opinion of him, either as to his abilities in point of reaſon or integrity (See 2. 1. 83.

1. 83. and 5. 3. 56.) and look upon his hero in no better light than that of a ſophiſt. (See 2. 4. 65.)

V. As to the method, Burnet ſays French Papiſts take to make proſelytes of Proteſtants, by engaging them firſt to become Atheiſts, which implies a poſitive perſuaſion that there is no God, he ſurely muſt be miſtaken: for altho' it were poſſible that, like the old Mexicans, who, as it is recorded, would have forfeited their ſhare of heaven for Spaniards being there, the rancour of French Papiſts might have riſen to ſuch a pitch, as to wiſh their fellow-ſubjects rather Infidels than Proteſtants: yet it is incredible that, bred up Chriſtians, they could have thought the thing juſtifiable, and Burnet's word will ſcarce ſuffice to prove it to be matter of fact. To ſet it off with any tolerable ſemblance of truth, he ſhould have ſingled out ſome of thoſe Engliſh Deiſts enumerated, (1. 5. 15.) and of whoſe principles he had a better opportunity of knowing the ſecret ſprings, who have been tutored by Papiſts.

VI. Should it be ſaid in juſtification, as it were, of ſuch a proceeding, that they are made Atheiſts, not with a view of remaining ſo, but of being made the eaſier converts of: beſides the unwarrantableneſs of doing evil, that good may come on't: the reply ſeems to labour under an erroneous hypotheſis: as the ſame impartial ſcrutiny of popery is equally neceſſary in paſſing thereto from atheiſm as from proteſtancy; and I apprehend, it is from thoſe French Papiſts inſiſting upon Proteſtants thus diveſting themſelves of all prejudice, and looking upon Popery in the ſame light as if they had been Atheiſts, that Burnet has framed his wild impeachment: yet no body of philoſophically ſound intellects, will ever take this to be making Atheiſts of them. (See 9. 1. 68. ¦ 5. 21.

VII. To conclude, I muſt own, the Deiſt, as a common enemy to both, often makes uſe of Popiſh arguments againſt Proteſtants, and of Proteſtant againſt Papiſts, the ſame as the Jew Apologiſt, to gain his point perſonates the Papiſt, (See 2. 1. 47.) but to infer from thence his good inclination towards, or affinity to either, would be as much as to conclude the friendſhip of a belligerant power towards either of the allies, he is in war with, from his endeavouring, by way of diverſion, to ſow diſcord and create jealouſy betwixt them, by appearing to be ſometimes better affected towards the one than the other; nor is it clear to me, it ſhould be a diſgrace to either party to be thus ſided with by the Deiſt; I ſhould rather think, it affords a preſumption that reaſon preponderates there: for as he makes it his only rule and chief ſtudy, it is to be ſuppoſed, he is beſt judge where it prevails. That men of genius, and of any liberal education are generally atheiſtical in Italy; that the Popiſh profeſſion of faith is ſuch a horrid impoſition upon the reaſon and underſtanding of mankind, that the very Romiſh clergy, who dare think for themſelves muſt be ſo too; that where Popery reigns, neither revealed nor even natural religion can take place, are ſuch uncommonly heavy charges, as, methinks, ſhould ſtand in need of better proof than this gentleman's bare Word. Whether freedom of thought is ſo cramped by Popery as he would make believe, may be known from what the Jew Apologiſt has wrote thereupon. (See 3. 13. 44.)

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

To

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *April 5.*

I. THAT is a noble concluſion of Mr. Locke, in his letter concerning toleration, and highly deſerving the attention of every government upon the face of the earth: that all thoſe who attribute unto the faithful, religious, and orthodox, that is, in plain terms, unto themſelves, any peculiar privilege or power above other mortals in civil concernments; or who, upon pretence of religion, do challenge any manner of authority over ſuch as are not aſſociated with them in their eccleſiaſtical communion; I ſay, theſe have no right to be tolerated by the civil magiſtrate; as neither of thoſe will own, and teach, the duty of tolerating all men in matters of MEER religion: for what do all theſe and the like doctrines ſignify, but that theſe men may, and are ready, upon any occaſion, to ſeize the government, and poſſeſs themſelves of the eſtates and fortunes of their fellow ſubjects? and that they only aſk leave to be tolerated by the magiſtrate ſo long, untill they find themſelves ſtrong enough to effect it?"

II. That this is a moſt exact deſcription of the principles and claims of the church of Rome, all the decrees and conſtitutions of her popes and general councils, moſt evidently manifeſt; and above all her uniform and invariable practice in all Popiſh countries, where no toleration whatſoever is given to any diſſenting Chriſtians, except to the few attendants of an ambaſſador, to which the law of nations forces them. In vain, therefore, does your Popiſh real Freethinker, plead for a greater indulgence to his inſolent ſect in this country of liberty. His plea ought, in all reaſon, to put us

more upon our guard, to leſſen the growing numbers of ſuch dangerous inmates, rather than enlarge their privileges, and give them greater power to hurt.

III. Nor is it an affair to be left entirely to the eſtabliſhed teachers of religion, whoſe flocks are ſaid to be above all others, an eaſy prey to the prowling Romiſh-prieſt; which, if it happen through their neglect, is but an ill return for the countenance and rich ſupport they receive from the Government: but it is the buſineſs of the civil magiſtrate to lend his aid, as it is not merely the Proteſtant religion that is in danger, but all the valuable rights and liberties of ſociety.

IV. In reply to a former aſſertion of this advocate, that it was ridiculous to charge Papiſts with holding that wicked principle of *keeping no Faith with Heretics*, whilſt they ſuffered ſo many pecuniary fines and other hardſhips in this country, rather than violate their conſciences, and take the oaths required of them: anſwer was made, that this was not charged upon them as a maxim influencing them in the ordinary commerce of life, but as a point allowed and ſacred amongſt them, on greater occaſions; and particularly, when by breach of moſt ſolemn oaths, the deſtruction of Heretics might be extraordinarily advanced. Thus in the council of Conſtance, which condemned John Huſs to death, in violation of the ſafe conduct given him by the emperor Sigiſmund, there was two decrees made, which are now extant, and unrepealed; in one of which it is declared, that, notwithſtanding any promiſe of protection and ſecurity, the eccleſiaſtical judge may proceed againſt the perſons, and puniſh ſuch as will not retract their errors: and in the other, that all thoſe ſhould be deemed favourers of Heretics, and guilty of treaſon, who ſhould pretend to

ſay,

ſay, that the emperor had done wrong in breaking the promiſe and protection given to John Huſs.

V. Under that weak and gloomy bigot, queen Mary, the effects of this deceitful and cruel doctrine of the Romiſh church were ſadly experienced by the men of Suffolk; who, being at that time very zealous for the Goſpel, refuſed to ſtand by her, till ſhe had promiſed to attempt no alteration in the religion eſtabliſhed by her brother, Edward VI. and yet no ſooner was the crown ſettled on her head, by their means, but ſhe filled the nation, and the county of Suffolk eſpecially, with the blood of Heretics, of men executed ſolely for their religion.

VI. We had later experience of this doctrine of the church of Rome in James II. who, notwithſtanding his coronation-oath, and royal profeſſions often repeated, to preſerve our religion and liberties; with the ſame breath, he ſet them all at naught, and was in the way to make himſelf an abſolute tyrant, a very French king, had not a good providence raiſed that ſcourge of tyrants, and aſſertor of the rights of humanity, Willam III. to be our deliverer.

VII. Your readers, ſir, will thank me for the following fine paſſage, much to my purpoſe, from a ſermon of the preſent Archbiſhop of Canterbury, preached a few years ago at Lambeth, and this year printed, in which, after recommending "to uſe all due precaution, that Papiſts may not ſucceed in their attempts hereafter, either by open force, or ſuch private arts of increaſing the number of their proſelytes, as may enable them to uſe force when they will." His grace immediately adds, "for the ſpirit of that church, though ſtudiouſly concealed, is ſtill the ſame. Not one of the vileſt actions done to ſerve it have they ever

by

by public authority condemned, liberal as they are of condemnation in other caſes; not one of the moſt extravagant claims made in favour of it, have they ever diſowned. And they cannot diſown with common modeſty, though they force themſelves to do it ſometimes, that they hold all promiſes and oaths to be void which they make to the prejudice of their religion and church; for it is the expreſs language of their infallible guides, their popes, and their councils. It is very true, their practices of late have not been ſo enormous as formerly: the temper of mankind is milder; their influence on the princes of the earth is leſs; and they have the wiſdom not to threaten, while they cannot ſtrike. But remember, our days have known the bloody executions of Thorn, and the mercileſs baniſhments of Saltſburgh; the inquiſition of Spain ſubſiſts in its full force; the impriſonments, the confiſcations, the inſlaving, the murdering of our Proteſtant brethren in France, have been revived within theſe few years, with the bittereſt fury, though entirely unprovoked. And if we will truſt thoſe who continue to ſhew, by ſuch marks, what they are, our folly will deſerve every thing which we can ſuffer."

I am, ſir,

An Heretic Freethinker.

For the Public Ledger, *May* 31.

Another Letter to the real Freethinker, *the Advocate for a Toleration of Popery in Great Britain.*

POPERY a BLOODY PROFESSION.

SIR,

I. IF I do not find Popery miſrepreſented, it ſeems to be incapable of being tolerated, with

with ſafety, in any Proteſtant community; for the general council of Conſtance has determined, *That no faith is to be kept with Heretics.* In the 19th ſeſſion of that aſſembly, it was decreed, that no ſafe conduct, tho' given by an emperor, king, or ſecular prince, ſhall hinder Heretics from being proſecuted, tho' they come to the place of judgment, relying upon ſuch ſecurity, as was the caſe of John Huſs; tho' the emperor Sigiſmund had engaged he ſhould go ſafe to and from the council; and the pope, John XXII. then preſent in council, had given his promiſe: yet he was miſerably impriſoned, and cruelly burned.

II. In like manner, the general council of Lateran, under pope Innocent III. forbids all favour to be ſhewn to Heretics, under the ſevereſt penalties; and decrees that favourers of Heretics ſhall be put under excommunication. That decree of pope Innocent ran thus: "If a temporal lord, required and admoniſhed by the church, ſhall "neglect to purge his territories of Hereſy, let "him be excommunicated; and if he ſhall neg- "lect to make ſatisfaction within the year, let it "be ſignified to the pope; that from that time "he may declare his vaſſals abſolved from their "allegiance; and expoſe his land to be ſeized by "Catholics, who may drive out the Heretics, "who poſſeſs it, without controul, and preſerve "it in the purity of the faith." *Lateran Council* 1215. *c.* 3.

III. This decree is recorded in the tomes of the councils, by their own writers, as an authentic act of the general council of Lateran under that pope; and inſerted by Gregory IX. into the decretals, which is the law of their church, and part of that which paſſes, with them, for divine law. There is, there can be, no act of their church more authoritative and obliging, than ſuch a de-

a decree as this. And this barbarous decree was put in execution in the days of that very pope who employed armies againſt the Albigenſes, and deſtroyed above 200,000 in the ſpace of ſome months. It was alſo executed in France, on St. Bartholomew's day, when 30 or 40 thouſand were treacherouſly, as well as cruelly, murdered, which bloody action was magnified as glorious, and honoured with a triumph at Rome: and the diabolical butchers rewarded with the bleſſing of his papal holineſs. A like bloody tragedy was acted in Ireland, upon more than 100,000 Proteſtants, by the pope's excitement. And in all countries, where Popery has been powerful enough, ſuch outrages have been committed under the warrant of the Roman Catholic doctrine. "If it were poſſible, "(ſays Bellarmin) to root out the Heretics, with- "out doubt they are to be deſtroyed root and "branch. But if it cannot be done, becauſe "they are ſtronger than we, and there be danger, "if they ſhould oppoſe us, that we ſhould be "worſted; then we are to be quiet.." *De Laic.* iii. 22. *p.* 1319.

IV. Nor are they only thus bound by the authority of their church, which enjoins ſuch butcheries by her peremptory decrees, but they are engaged thereunto, to the uttermoſt, from her making ſuch extirpating acts meritorious; having aſſurances from the pope of thoſe indulgences and privileges, which were granted to the adventurers for the recovery of the holy land; which are expreſſed in an appendix to the Lateran council, to be a full pardon of all their ſins here, and a greater meaſure of glory hereafter. V. *Council Lateran, ſub Innocent* III. *can.* 3. At no leſs rate do they value the blood of thoſe whom they account Heretics: with ſuch motives do they inſpire the hopes, and engage the ſavage reſolution of their devotees to

en-

endeavour, as far as is poſſible, the extirmination of Hereſy. Even the good-natured amongſt them, who have the greateſt averſion to ſuch barbarities, lie expoſed to the urgent temptations, from the greateſt rewards their religion can propoſe, and from its moſt dreadful menaces, if they ſhould remain uncomplying and diſobedient, but alſo from the ſecular allurements of poſſeſſing the properties of the butchered Heretics. They muſt ſubmit to ſuch ſhocking inhumanities, if they will be accounted Chriſtians; i. e. they muſt either extirminate Heretics, or be damned. *Clarkſon, c. 7. ſec. 5. p. 206.*

V. The office of Peter is twofold, to *feed*, and to *kill*. *Baronius epiſt. ad Pap. contr. Venet.* They who are for peace with Heretics, are worſe than either Turks or Heretics; becauſe they refuſe to propagate Popery by war and arms. Such ought to be expelled out of ſtates, as the Athenians expelled thoſe ancient Atheiſts, Diagoras and Protagoras; and a reward be offered to him that ſhall murder them. *Stapleton in orat. contra Polit. habita Duaci.*

VI. This is the language of the order of Jeſus. "We ſcattered all over the world, of whom "there is continual ſucceſſion and great numbers, "have entered into an holy league, not, as long "as one of us ſhall remain, will we lay aſide our "concern and deſign for your ſalvation; and no "force, no power of the Engliſh ſhall break the "meaſures we have engaged in." *Campian. in epiſt. ad conſiliar Regis. Angl.*

VII. All heretics, their receivers, defenders and favourers, are by law declared infamous, and incapable of being admitted to public offices, or councils; to be witneſſes; to make wills; or enjoy inheritances, &c. *Concil. Lateran, Innocent.* III. *cap.* 3.

VIII. Here-

a decree as this. And this barbarous decree was put in execution in the days of that very pope who employed armies againſt the Albigenſes, and deſtroyed above 200,000 in the ſpace of ſome months. It was alſo executed in France, on St. Bartholomew's day, when 30 or 40 thouſand were treacherouſly, as well as cruelly, murdered, which bloody action was magnified as glorious, and honoured with a triumph at Rome: and the diabolical butchers rewarded with the bleſſing of his papal holineſs. A like bloody tragedy was acted in Ireland, upon more than 100,000 Proteſtants, by the pope's excitement. And in all countries, where Popery has been powerful enough, ſuch outrages have been committed under the warrant of the Roman Catholic doctrine. "If it were poſſible, "(ſays Bellarmin) to root out the Heretics, with- "out doubt they are to be deſtroyed root and "branch. But if it cannot be done, becauſe "they are ſtronger than we, and there be danger, "if they ſhould oppoſe us, that we ſhould be "worſted; then we are to be quiet.." *De Laic.* iii. 22. *p.* 1319.

IV. Nor are they only thus bound by the authority of their church, which enjoins ſuch butcheries by her peremptory decrees, but they are engaged thereunto, to the uttermoſt, from her making ſuch extirpating acts meritorious; having aſſurances from the pope of thoſe indulgences and privileges, which were granted to the adventurers for the recovery of the holy land; which are expreſſed in an appendix to the Lateran council, to be a full pardon of all their ſins here, and a greater meaſure of glory hereafter. V. *Council Lateran, ſub Innocent* III. *can.* 3. At no leſs rate do they value the blood of thoſe whom they account Heretics: with ſuch motives do they inſpire the hopes, and engage the ſavage reſolution of their devotees to

en-

endeavour, as far as is poſſible, the extirmination of Hereſy. Even the good-natured amongſt them, who have the greateſt averſion to ſuch barbarities, lie expoſed to the urgent temptations, from the greateſt rewards their religion can propoſe, and from its moſt dreadful menaces, if they ſhould remain uncomplying and diſobedient, but alſo from the ſecular allurements of poſſeſſing the properties of the butchered Heretics. They muſt ſubmit to ſuch ſhocking inhumanities, if they will be accounted Chriſtians; i. e. they muſt either extirminate Heretics, or be damned. *Clarkſon, c. 7. ſec. 5. p. 206.*

V. The office of Peter is twofold, to *feed*, and to *kill*. *Baronius epiſt. ad Pap. contr. Venet.* They who are for peace with Heretics, are worſe than either Turks or Heretics; becauſe they refuſe to propagate Popery by war and arms. Such ought to be expelled out of ſtates, as the Athenians expelled thoſe ancient Atheiſts, Diagoras and Protagoras; and a reward be offered to him that ſhall murder them. *Stapleton in orat. contra Polit. habita Duaci.*

VI. This is the language of the order of Jeſus. "We ſcattered all over the world, of whom "there is continual ſucceſſion and great numbers, "have entered into an holy league, not, as long "as one of us ſhall remain, will we lay aſide our "concern and deſign for your ſalvation; and no "force, no power of the Engliſh ſhall break the "meaſures we have engaged in." *Campian. in epiſt. ad conſiliar Regis. Angl.*

VII. All heretics, their receivers, defenders and favourers, are by law declared infamous, and incapable of being admitted to public offices, or councils; to be witneſſes; to make wills; or enjoy inheritances, &c. *Concil. Lateran, Innocent. III. cap. 3.*

VIII. Here-

VIII. Heretics loſe all which they enjoy by civil right *Le Graffiis. decis. aur.* ii. 11. *n.* 12. And to add no more, Catholic ſubjects are bound to exempt themſelves from the obedience of a Proteſtant prince; and to take up arms againſt him, if they have ſufficient force. *Bannes. in thom.* 2.2. 9, 10. *p.* 614.

IX. The queſtion now is, whether a profeſſion that avows theſe principles ſo deſtructive to mankind, can have any poſſible pretence to toleration, in any ſtate or under any government which is founded on the principles of truth, ſound policy, or humanity? Is it not the wiſdom and the duty of thoſe in the civil adminiſtration to provide, as much as poſſible, againſt the ſpreading of ſuch a diabolical profeſſion? Unleſs therefore, it can be ſatisfactorily ſhewn, that the people who aſſume the name of Catholics have now cordially changed all their firſt principles, and are firmly perſuaded, that neither the pope nor councils can render it lawful for them to hate, or injure in life or property, thoſe, who exerciſe the rights of private judgment in all matters of faith and worſhip, no plea, that is reaſonable, can be offered in defence of an unlimitted toleration.

X. However it may be ſaid, to the diſgrace of Proteſtants, that they have perſecuted one another, ſuch behaviour will, by no means, put them upon a level with Popery; ſince Proteſtants cannot perſecute or hurt any of their fellow-creatures upon their profeſſed principles; and all violations of the religious liberties of one another, is wholly owing to a reſemblance they put on of the Popiſh ſpirit, in thoſe outrages of which they are at any time guilty.

XI. The reformation from Popery is confeſſedly, ſo far imperfect, as any dependance is made on the power of the prieſt, to abſolve or execrate: and

and until there does obtain a more univerſal abhorrence of all ſpiritual dominion over conſcience, the general profeſſion of the Chriſtian religion will appear but in the condition of the woman travelling in child-birth, and in pain to be delivered. So far as the reformation has taken place, we have abundant evidence of the attempts made to deſtroy all the fruits of it. Whether the war which is made with the remnant that keep the commandments of God, and who have the teſtimony of Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall have a longer continuance, or ſoon have an end, I pretend not to ſay; however, this muſt be certain, that the Chriſtian religion has no real exiſtence in the world, any farther than men examine and judge for themſelves, of the teachings of Jeſus.

PHILALEUTHEROS.

LETTER XII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *October* 18.

I. THESE two letters I have joined together, as breathing the ſame ſpirit, and, in all appearance, written by the ſame author, who varied his title probably to ſhew the world, he underſtood Greek. Though moſt of, if not all the difficulties here raiſed may, I imagine, be levelled from what has been already ſaid: yet, were it only for the reſpectable authorities of the renowned Mr. Locke and preſent Archbiſhop of Canterbury, here quoted, and the infamous charges of treachery, diſloyalty,

loyalty, and thirſting after blood, which would diſgrace the worſt of profeſſions, a ſlight diſcant upon the heads thereof, even by way of repetition, will, I preſume, not be reckoned ſo irkſome a tautology.

II. The tranſcendent abilities of Mr Locke, that ſo much admired maſterly reaſoner, for having waded much farther than uſual into the ſecret receſſes and unfathomable depths of the human underſtanding, are given up to the *Heretic Freethinker* (103. I.) and *Anti-papiſta*: (15. VI.) But is this a reaſon, his opinion upon any ſubject whatſoever muſt be deemed irrefragable? or is it not one of thoſe inconſiſtencies caſt into theſe gentlemen and brethren's teeth, that, after having renounced the infallibility of the church, they often pin their faith upon a ſingle perſon's ſleeve? and really Locke's concluſion againſt the toleration of Papiſts for their adhering to a foreign eccleſiaſtical authority, without diſtinguiſhing betwixt the ſpiritual and civil, the dogmatical and variable exertion thereof appears to me, from what has already been ſaid, not ſo inconteſtably true (See 19. VII. & 38. IV.) Sure if an apprentice or ſervant, for deſerting their ſtation, or ſoldier his colours, cannot in reaſon pretend to get rid of their engagements to their reſpective maſters: ſo neither ſhould the members of a church expect, for their changing ſides, to be diſcharged, as is here pretended, (103. I.) from their allegiance thereto.

III. The quotation from his lordſhip ſeems to labour under the ſame miſtake. It ſhould have been proved, it is a popiſh dogm not to keep faith with Heretics to the prejudice of religion. Sure our *Heretic Freethinker* will not pretend, the council of Conſtance condemning as favourers of Heretics ſuch as blamed the violation of the ſafe-conduct (104. IV.) to be the ſame as condemning them as Heretics, when

when it is an inſinuation of quite the reverſe. If this was only a repealable law of diſcipline, the pacifick treaties of the empire are ſufficient indications that it has been actually repealed. (80. V.) As to the cruelties and ſeverities complained of by his Lordſhip and *Philaleutheros*, ſuch topics of endleſs litigation I give up to the diſcuſſion of our late *Freethinker* and other gentlemen of his caſt, who, I am convinced, will improve the matter to the turning the tables upon their antagoniſts: I will only ſay, that at this very day ſome branches even of the reformation groan in the ſpirit and diſcover ſecret mutterings at the ill treatment they meet with at the hands of their brethren, and then aſk if this be the reſult of avowed principles? or not? if not, as is pretended, (110. X.) I do not ſee why Papiſts may not be in the caſe; nor why both ſides were not ſtill parallel, ſhould it be pretended that Papiſts act from a ſettled and deep-rooted antipathy.

IV. But what above all merits our remark here is the *Heretic Freethinker*, after Cladget's example, (4. 1. 5.) calling in the magiſtrate to the aid of the eſtabliſhed teachers of religion: (104. III.) this uniform ſenſe of moſt of, if not all theſe champions, almoſt tempts me to recant and be of the *Freethinker*'s mind, as I can perceive but very little, if any difference betwixt this conduct and Arabian deſpotiſm, (23. VII.) nor form any idea of liberty without an alternative, and eſpecially as I apprehend their recourſe to main force could proceed but either from a conſciouſneſs of their own diſability, which I cannot preſume, or the injuſtice of their cauſe.

V. Be that as it may, the expedient can ſcarce anſwer any other end than of making bad worſe, nothing, in my opinion, could ſo contribute towards re-eſtabliſhing religious harmony than get-

ting prieſts to fight their own battles, and the reſt of mankind to ſign a perfect neutrality until they came to an agreement. If the point were to be decided ſword in hand, it is more than probable, that this more than effeminately daſtardly race would ſooner put it in compromiſe than, not only run the riſk of their lives, but even of having their ſkins ſlightly grazed upon. Had Zwinglius not had a troop of military accoutred peaſants at his back, I will be bold to ſay, he had never taken the field. If ſtate-quarrels were to be adjuſted by the head magiſtrates in ſingle combats, we ſhould not find them ſo liberal of their manifeſtos as when thouſands of other lives are to be ſacrificed, whilſt they themſelves occupy the center or rear of the *corps de reſerve*.

VI. Were the weapons for deciding the point to be the tongue or pen, or both, as more ſuitable to the ſacred character, the only thing to be then dreaded, would be, that the wounds they make not being ſo ſenſibly felt, neither party would give out, whence the conteſt might become everlaſting; Hence it is, that, as military men, to improve their fortunes, are eager for war, ſo theſe ghoſtly champions inceſſantly diſplay their zeal to widen the breach. But this evil might, I imagine, be prevented, by applying much the ſame ſalve thereto as is preſcribed to our conclaviſts: I would not pretend to get them all confined under the ſame roof, nor even within the ſame town-walls, the thing were impracticable: but inſtead of this, I would get for the firſt year of the ſchiſm one third of the livings of all the beneficed clergy, not excepting even the ſovereign pontiff, ſequeſtrated. For the ſecond two thirds, and for the third, bread only and water ſhould be their whole ſuſtenance, without hopes of any further allowance, until they were agreed; leaving the method how this ſhould

ſhould be brought about to their own option, whether by perſonal interviews of themſelves or agents, or (what I fancy, were the more eligible, as otherwiſe much wrangling, nay blows, might enſue) an epiſtolary correſpondence; in which caſe, merely pretended zealots for religion would in the long run, moſt likely, for their having until then ſo daintily fared, rather forfeit their belief than pinch their bellies.

VII. It cannot be ſaid, the plan is not feaſible, as there is nothing therein that princes may not get executed in their reſpective territories: nor were it at all unſeemly, as this ſlender diet approaches nearer, and bears a greater reſemblance to the more than uncommonly ſo repaſts of the original founders of chriſtianity, the apoſtles, who, I am convinced, went often whole days without a hearty meal of bread even and water, as it is not at all likely, that they who, whilſt Chriſt was as yet with them, plucked a few ears of corn when pinched with hunger, (Mark ii. 23.) made better cheer, when he was gone; nor ſhould ſuch a neutrality ſeem more extraordinary than that entered upon by moſt of the European powers about the time of the council of Piſa, when there were different pretenders to the papacy. (3. 4. 84.)

VIII. Should another clauſe be tacked to the former, to wit, that unleſs the parties came to a coalition by ſuch a time, after leaving the preſent ſet of incumbents in the enjoyment of their benefices for life, the eſtabliſhed religion from thence forward ſhould be Deiſm, we ſhould ſoon find this much ſuch another as Solomon's famed ſcheme (2. *Kings* iii. 24.) as probably many, like the pretended mother, by their little fervour for promoting the union, would betray an indifferency for the downfall of Chriſtianity. Sure I am however, that this method were by far more eligible than putting the

iſſue upon the warrant of a magiſtrate, who, tho' very judicious in other reſpects, may poſſibly know as little of the merits of the cauſe, it is here granted for as of the Cartheſian elements or Newtonian fluxions. But it is not ſo much the inexpediency as the inconſiſtency of applying to the ſecular arm I would inſiſt upon.

Your's,

A Real Seeker.

For the Public Ledger. *June* 7.

I. I HAVE often thought one great reaſon of Popery's prevailing, is its great Convenience; in that a man fancies he can get to heaven by only faith, without doing much or any good in the world; and ſo he finds it eaſier and cheaper to fob off God Almighty with a parcel of prayers and faſtings in this world, (as he idly hopes) rather than to be at the expence or trouble of doing good works towards men. Nay ſuch a falſe but convenient religion, (calculated indeed more for this world than the next, and more for the advantage of prieſts, and convenience of thoſe who buy their indulgences for all ſorts of vices and crimes, than any thing elſe) not only promiſes them heaven on ſuch eaſy terms, without virtue, or any good works, forgetting the ſcripture rule, *Let men ſee your good works*, &c. but even lets them get thither with a load of bad ones, and clears them of all the crimes they can commit either in cheating or debauchery; if they will but faſt a little now and then, when living; and leave but money

money enough to the prieſts for ſo many maſſes to be ſaid, for the repoſe of their ſouls, after death.

II. Such fools as can implicitly believe ſuch ſtuff, deſerve indeed to be prieſt-rid as they are, with a witneſs, in the countries where ſuch nonſenſe prevails; where indeed it ſeems morally impoſſible, that a rich man ſhould go to the Devil at all, which thoſe unhappy people believe, tho' ſo diametrically oppoſite to the words of Chriſt himſelf, viz. "That it is eaſier for a Camel to go thro' the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." That is, as Chriſt was pleaſed to explain it, "One that truſteth to his riches:" And that theſe fools truſt in theirs, in the moſt important of all concerns, is methinks pretty evident.

III. Even Monſ. Boileau, a Papiſt himſelf, ridicules this abſurd way of getting to heaven, by one pointed line in his fine poems;

Rendre a Dieu ce qu'on a volé au monde;

yet the deluſion and the trade ſtill goes on; and they fancy it a leſs crime to omit doing a good action, than a faſt or prayer day. Thank God! our pure religion admits not of ſuch tenets; is built upon good works as well as faith; and on that unerring principle of the founder of it. "How can a man love God, whom he hath not ſeen; if he love not his brother, whom he hath ſeen? If a man love God, let him love his brother alſo. Faith without good works is vain."

I am, Sir, your's,

Plain Truth.

LETTER XIII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *November* 15.

I. THIS letter contains ſuch another charge as the *Tillotſonian*'s, (95. I.) and is a very ſingular inſtance of a blindly recriminating genius. It is notorious that the ſufficiency of faith, excluſive of good works, to God's favour was a reproach juſtly made to original proteſtancy, and as much ſo that papiſts have been and are to this day upbraided with laying the whole ſtreſs upon the exteriors of religion, (4. 9. 1, &c.) that he could take it into his head to reverſe the charge muſt therefore, to put the beſt conſtruction upon it, be attributed to his knowing no better; however, were an Infidel to be judge herein, his verdict, I fancy, would be the ſame with that of a perſon, who, travelling in a Proteſtant country, and being told the reaſon the ſhops were there ſhut on a week-day, was its being a general faſt, to bring a bleſſing upon his majeſty's arms, humorouſly ſaid: nay then you ſtand but a poor chance for the victory, as the faſts of the French, you are in war with, beat yours by great odds.

II. It is true, he makes a difference betwixt prayer and faſting on the one ſide, and the commandments on the other, as if Papiſts pretended by mumbling over a ſet form of words, and refraining certain viandes, eſpecially when indulgences and maſſes interfere, they make full amends for the groſſeſt infractions of theſe, and go ſtraight to heaven without more ado. This indeed, if true, were more than enough to diſgrace that party; but unluckily for him, it only blaſts his own credit. Neither maſſes nor indulgences intitle any more to heaven, than a reprieve from tranſportation, into which a ſentence of death had been com-

commuted, does to the freedom of a ſubject him to whom it is granted: for as it is the exchange of theſe penalties that properly gives the freedom, and that the reprieve only determines the time he is to enter upon it; ſo it is with the heart's ſorrow and indulgence. (See 2. 8. 42.) He ſhould therefore have ſhewn, it is a popiſh tenet of faith that maſſes and indulgences remit not only the pain which retards the entry of heaven, but alſo the mortal guilt, which ever excludes from thence, unleſs changed into that. As to the ſtipendiary maſſing prieſts whoſe practice he would condemn upon the reſpectable authority of Monſ. Boileau, who very likely knew more of rhyme than ſound reaſon or theology, I refer him for the diſcovery of his miſtake to (2. 8. 51.) but ſuppoſing the thing never ſo unwarrantable, what were this to the church that never made it a dogm? It is aſtoniſhing how gentlemen, who, no doubt, would be thought divines, could in the preſent controverſy amuſe themſelves and others with forgeries, private opinions, or abuſes, when church dogms are known to be the only bone of contention. Hence it is that a late hiſtory of the Iriſh maſſacre, like that of the popes' lives, muſt have been calculated (if not for a catch-penny by ſuiting the vulgar taſte) rather to give vent to rancorous ſpleen than indulge a truly polemical vein; as, even giving up the whole of the facts, Popery might ſtill remain unſhaken. (See. 24. IX.)

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *Auguſt* 9.

I. OVER and over again has it been proved, during the preſent ſkirmiſh in your paper, betwixt Papiſts and Proteſtants, that it is not for

playing the fool in religion, but for playing the rogue in the ſtate, that Papiſts are not freely tolerated in this country of ours. The charge they deny eaſily; but can only diſprove it by a renunciatiation of the biſhop of *Rome*'s ſupremacy, and a clear conceſſion of the ſame religious liberty to others which they claim for themſelves. 'Till this be done their plea is not to be hearkened to; for though one of their advocates has alledged, in excuſe of ſome of their principles, that mankind are not much governed by their principles; yet we knew, and have felt, that Papiſts are governed by *theirs*.

II. But this cauſe I leave to abler hands: and ſhall exhibit to your readers one of theſe people's religious fooleries, many of which are truly ridiculous, but ſome neither ſo laughable, nor ſo innocent as others. Amongſt the latter number I reckon their *auricular confeſſion*, or their telling of their ſins in the ear of the prieſt, for the benefit of his abſolution. Father Le Chaiſe's dealings with Louis XIV. in conſcience in the laſt century, and the ruin of ſo many thouſands of Proteſtants in conſequence of it, is one of many proofs, how fatal to civil ſociety ſuch a doctrine is. As miſerable indeed muſt that country be, whoſe prince is in the hands and tutorage of prieſts, of all ſtateſmen the moſt unfit and the moſt unfortunate.

III. But Louis was allowed his miſtreſſes in plenty, if he would but conſent to perſecute and baniſh his Proteſtant ſubjects for the glory of God. And not the leaſt obnoxious part of this prieſt-whiſpering doctrine is, that it is ſuch a fruitful ſource and promoter of all manner of lewdneſs and debauchery. I ſhall not ſully the pure white of your paper or offend the public ear, by recounting well known hiſtories of confeſſions, new and old, but ſhall draw my proof from the moſt unſuſpected records,

and

and in the language of a book entitled, " *The* " *Garden of the Soul, Or a Manual of ſpiritual Ex-* " *erciſes*, &c." printed by T. Meighan, in Dru-ry-Lane; and in the hands of every good Catho-lic that can read; where page 209, 210, amongſt many other articles of the kind, upon which per-ſons to be confeſſed, are to prepare themſelves to be examined, are the following:

IV. " Have you been guilty of fornication, or adultery, or inceſt, or any ſin againſt nature, either with a perſon of the ſame ſex, or with any other creature? How often? Or have you deſign-ed, or attempted any ſuch ſin, or ſought to in-duce others to it? How often? " Have you been guilty of ſelf-pollution, or of immodeſt touches of yourſelf? How often? What follows is ſtill more offenſive. I aſk, could *Aretine*, could the infamous *Voltaire*, or the not leſs infamous but more ingenious Crebillon, invent any thing more effectual to taint and corrupt the virtuous mind than by infuſing ſuch ideas, and familiariſing the mind to them, under the ſacred maſk of religion?

V. " Is it any excuſe for the making ſuch lewd and beaſtly demands, that it is in the ſhape or un-der the pretext of a ſpiritual exerciſe? Demands fit only to find a place in a manual for the uſe of young ladies educated at ſuch an academy as the late Mrs. Douglas's; and ſome of them of ſo ſhocking a kind, and ſo groſsly offenſive to hu-man nature, as could not, even in ſuch a ſemina-ry as that, be heard without the utmoſt abhorrence, and calling back the long loſt bluſh into the vi-ſages of theſe votaries themſelves," theſe laſt words are taken from, " *A letter to a friend, on his having thoughts of marrying a lady of the Roman Catholic religion.* London printed for R. Baldwin, in Pa-ter-noſter-row, 1763, well worthy the peruſal of every Catholic as well as Proteſtant." Behold

here

playing the fool in religion, but for playing the rogue in the ſtate, that Papiſts are not freely tolerated in this country of ours. The charge they deny eaſily; but can only diſprove it by a renunciation of the biſhop of *Rome*'s ſupremacy, and a clear conceſſion of the ſame religious liberty to others which they claim for themſelves. 'Till this be done their plea is not to be hearkened to; for though one of their advocates has alledged, in excuſe of ſome of their principles, that mankind are not much governed by their principles; yet we knew, and have felt, that Papiſts are governed by *theirs*.

II. But this cauſe I leave to abler hands: and ſhall exhibit to your readers one of theſe people's religious fooleries, many of which are truly ridiculous, but ſome neither ſo laughable, nor ſo innocent as others. Amongſt the latter number I reckon their *auricular confeſſion*, or their telling of their ſins in the ear of the prieſt, for the benefit of his abſolution. Father Le Chaiſe's dealings with Louis XIV. in conſcience in the laſt century, and the ruin of ſo many thouſands of Proteſtants in conſequence of it, is one of many proofs, how fatal to civil ſociety ſuch a doctrine is. As miſerable indeed muſt that country be, whoſe prince is in the hands and tutorage of prieſts, of all ſtateſmen the moſt unfit and the moſt unfortunate.

III. But Louis was allowed his miſtreſſes in plenty, if he would but conſent to perſecute and baniſh his Proteſtant ſubjects for the glory of God. And not the leaſt obnoxious part of this prieſt-whiſpering doctrine is, that it is ſuch a fruitful ſource and promoter of all manner of lewdneſs and debauchery. I ſhall not ſully the pure white of your paper or offend the public ear, by recounting well known hiſtories of confeſſions, new and old, but ſhall draw my proof from the moſt unſuſpected records,

and

and in the language of a book entitled, " *The* " *Garden of the Soul, Or a Manual of ſpiritual Ex-* " *erciſes*, &c." printed by T. Meighan, in Drury-Lane; and in the hands of every good Catholic that can read; where page 209, 210, amongſt many other articles of the kind, upon which perſons to be confeſſed, are to prepare themſelves to be examined, are the following:

IV. " Have you been guilty of fornication, or adultery, or inceſt, or any ſin againſt nature, either with a perſon of the ſame ſex, or with any other creature? How often? Or have you deſigned, or attempted any ſuch ſin, or ſought to induce others to it? How often? " Have you been guilty of ſelf-pollution, or of immodeſt touches of yourſelf? How often? What follows is ſtill more offenſive. I aſk, could *Aretine*, could the infamous *Voltaire*, or the not leſs infamous but more ingenious Crebillon, invent any thing more effectual to taint and corrupt the virtuous mind than by infuſing ſuch ideas, and familiariſing the mind to them, under the ſacred maſk of religion?

V. " Is it any excuſe for the making ſuch lewd and beaſtly demands, that it is in the ſhape or under the pretext of a ſpiritual exerciſe? Demands fit only to find a place in a manual for the uſe of young ladies educated at ſuch an academy as the late Mrs. Douglas's; and ſome of them of ſo ſhocking a kind, and ſo groſsly offenſive to human nature, as could not, even in ſuch a ſeminary as that, be heard without the utmoſt abhorrence, and calling back the long loſt bluſh into the viſages of theſe votaries themſelves," theſe laſt words are taken from, " *A letter to a friend, on his having thoughts of marrying a lady of the Roman Catholic religion.* London printed for R. Baldwin, in Pater-noſter-row, 1763, well worthy the peruſal of every Catholic as well as Proteſtant." Behold

here

here, Sir, one ſample out of many others, of that right diſcipline, which the *Real Seeker*, that true ſon of darkneſs, is for bringing us Proteſtants under. But Britiſh mothers, and Britiſh maids, beware of the ſly queſtions of an inſinuating fallacious Prieſt.

I am Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

A Real Finder.

LETTER. XIV.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger. *December* 13.

I. IF this gentleman, as it is natural to believe, pretends to found a right to his title of *finder*, upon his diſcovering what I am in queſt of, the genuine chriſtian religion: of all thoſe who have hitherto appeared in this controverſy, he, to my thinking, leaſt deſerves the appellation, as he only ecchoes what they had trumpeted of Popery's perniciouſneſs. This indeed were enough, had the point been, I do not ſay repeatedly, but even once inconteſtably proved. My endeavours hitherto were partly to ſhew, that Popery has no religious principles pernicious to government; and conſequently, that ſome laws now in force againſt it, have been calculated merely for the ſake of torturing mens conſciences by abjuring innoxious ones: nor do I find any thing has as yet been effectua'ly urged to overthrow this.

II. He appeals indeed to a letter-writter of the 19th of July, ſubſcribing himſelf *Merchant*, one of

of our *Freethinker*'s encomiasts, who from laying the stress of his argument in favour of Papists upon their not acting up to their principles, seems to give a broad hint of their having some that are unjustifiable. But it is amazing he could imagine, Papists could in their wits adopt the pleadings of a reasoner of such a temper and stamp. First, contrary to good order and the benefit arising to society from the subsiding of animosities, he reproaches a regulating officer with a reprimand given him, as he would pretend, in a respectable court, by which means he puts up the blood of *Young Anti-papista* and brethren. (See 55. &c.) Secondly, how could it be that Papists remaining Papists, should run counter to their own principles? (20. X.) or that even then they could appear in Protestant eyes otherwise than as temporising hypocrites? how could they expect to be depended upon or trusted? what other reason can there be assigned, why the keeper of stag-hounds may with safety go into their kennel, when a den of lyons or tygers cannot be ventured into by theirs; but that these of ferocity and those of tractableness, have an indellibly inbred *principle?* that the Maltaise, when taken by the Infidels are worse used than the crews of other Mediteranean cruisers: but that the profession or *principle* of these knights is thought to be neither to give nor take quarters? or that we venture to eat fish, tho' sometimes people are choaked with its bones: but never hemlock: unless it be that this herb has a naturally poisonous *principle* or quality; whereas fish is but accidentally hurtful? Should Papists therefore in reality have any pernicious principles, it would be vain to persuade Protestants of their inactivity, or not influencing their conduct. 3dly, with what face can he upbraid Protestants, as

he

he here does, with not being governed by their own principle of freedom of thought, when in almoſt the ſame breath he makes this very conduct his apology for Papiſts? Calviniſm indeed (he might ſay Proteſtantiſm in general) rejects the merit of good works: but then it is their anſwering other purpoſes (See 4. 9. 81.) that hinders the virtuous and moral conduct of its votaries to be inconſiſtent; whereas a principle of diſloyalty, for inſtance, can have no other end but the ſubverſion of government.

III. As to the fooleries nay and more than laughable abuſes, which the *finder* pretends, attend confeſſion, they, if even made out to a demonſtration, ſhould be no exception to its uſefulneſs or even neceſſity: but if the lewd, and, as he calls them, beaſtly demands ſtated in the *Garden of the Soul*, for facilitating people's examination of conſcience, be ſo intollerably abuſive, may in ſome meaſure be known from the ſolution of the following queries, on which occaſion I muſt, by way of apology, expreſs my concern, that a juſt and neceſſary defence of what I take to be truth, drives me to touch upon any ſuch obſcenities.

IV. Query 1. Does the good of ſociety and of the matrimonial ſtate in particular, not give a right to ſue for a divorce, upon an allegation of impotency and adultery: tho' in the courſe of the trial many an indecent queſtion may be thought neceſſary to be anſwered and canvaſſed in open court? Query 2. Does the preſervation of life not excuſe the ladies for undergoing the operation of a fiſtula, and being attended in child-bed by a man midwife, notwithſtanding the natural ſhame and abhorrence they are impreſſed with of exhibiting their *pudenda* to the other ſex? As I preſume the anſwers, in conformity to the practice of the times will be in the affirmative, I would only aſk why ſuch indelicacies

licacies ſhould not be overlooked when the welfare of the ſoul is at ſtake? all therefore he can urge upon this head will end in ſmoke, unleſs he firſt overthrows the expediency and neceſſity of confeſſion for people's ſpiritual advancement.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

LETTER XV.

Change-Alley, December 22, 1766.

To the Maſter of an Academy not many Miles W--- of London.

SIR,

I. HAVING had the pleaſure of being in your company ſome time ſince, it was much heightened by the candid and rational account I obſerved you give (upon what occaſion I cannot recollect) of your religious principles. You were pleaſed to tell us, that, at the head of a boarding-ſchool you made it your ſtudy inceſſantly to inculcate the uſefulneſs and neceſſity of moral duty, leaving it to the reſpective parents of your pupils to get them inſtructed in the myſterious part of religion, either by themſelves or your uſher; as you could not warrant teaching others what you did not underſtand yourſelf; however, that at ſet times you gave them lectures relative to the groſs abſurdities of popery, which, by way of ſample, you inſtanced in the tenets of Chriſt's real preſence and tranſubſtantiation in the Lord's ſupper, alledging for reaſon, that the prieſt, to convince you of the former, ſhould give you a proof of the long-ſince explod-

exploded *ordeal* kind, by eating a conſecrated bread mixed before-hand with arſenic; and that you would as ſoon believe theſe words, *this is my body*, the chief foundation of theſe tenets, not to be in ſcripture, as the latter contrary to your ſenſes, which arguments you ſeemed to lay the more ſtreſs upon, as you had borrowed them of a lady of diſtinguiſhed abilities, who, travelling on a time into Flanders, made uſe of them to good purpoſe againſt the importunate ſolicitations of a Monk for her turning Papiſt.

II. Now, ſir, you muſt underſtand, that I am and have been for years as eager for ſounding theſe religious arcana, and making a choice amidſt ſuch a variety of perſuaſions of the myſterious kind, as ever jocky was to get foremoſt to the winning-poſt, ſo ardent was my zeal in the purſuit of my ſcheme, that I fear to have given offence, however innocently, by ſome letters addreſſed for publication to the Printer of the *Public Ledger*, with a view of receiving ſome information thoro' that channel. My caſe is ſo well known to the readers thereof during the laſt ſummer, that, ſhould you not be of the number, I only need refer you to them for the knowledge of its true ſtate; when you have once become acquainted withal, I make no doubt of your ſhare of benevolence, to require no further apology for this liberty.

III. Though Calvin has reckoned minching in matter of religion highly criminal, yet I ſhall not take you to taſk for acting offenſively in oppoſition to the tenets peculiar to Popery, whilſt you ſign a neutrality with thoſe it holds in common with Proteſtancy. *Self* has been the reigning Idol in all ages, inſomuch that Socrates, Plato, and the very Stoiks, who made ſuch profeſſions of diſintereſtedneſs and virtue, held a candle, and, againſt conviction, conformed to the times; nor do I fancy th

the world has mended, as to this, for having grown older: they are not then ſuch natural foibles as theſe I would quarrel with you about. I only mean to ſubmit ſome doubts, I entertain, touching the above attacks upon Popery, to your ſerious conſideration, requeſting you would be kind enough to ſend the following queries with their reſpective ſolutions, to Mr. Francis Newbery, at the Crown in Pater-Noſter-Row, who upon the ſtrength of your recommendation will, I am convinced, from his wonted impartiality, inſert them amongſt the obſervations of his correſpondents, or elſewhere.

IV. Query 1. If the infirmities and many imperfections of human nature have not been abſorbed or deſtroyed for its being aſſumed by the Son of God, why ſhould arſenick loſe its poiſonous quality in bread for its being conſecrated? Query 2. Suppoſing the trial, required here, ſucceſsfully made, might it not be attributed to ſorcery or magick, and conſequently not reckoned an inſufficient proof? Query 3. Were God to tell us, there is no ſuch thing in ſcripture as *this is my body*, ſhould we believe him contrary to our ſenſes, or not? if ſo, why not in the caſe of tranſubſtantiation? if not. Query 4. Is it poſſible he could make any thing otherwiſe appear to us than it really is? if ſo: why not here? if not; then the appearances are a better rule to go by than his omnipotent word, the reaſonableneſs of which poſition is left to the judgment of your academick impartiality, by

Sir, Your's,

A real Seeker.

Tho' I have promiſed above (94.) to finiſh here, yet an anonimous gentleman, calling himſelf

ſelf *a rationaliſt*, having applied to me, after being diſappointed elſewhere, for the ſolution of the following queries, relative to a controverſy carried on in the *Public Ledger* between *a church of England man* and *Philanthropos*, a *Quaker*, touching the unſeemlineſs or impropriety of the latter's opening ſhop on Chriſtmas-day laſt; I, unable to ſatisfy him, get them inſerted here, in order to be anſwered by ſuch of the contending parties as they may concern. Query 1. If, without ſcruple or any warrant from ſcripture, *Quakers*, inſtead of Saturday obſerve the Sabbath on Sunday in memory of Chriſt's reſurrection: why ſhould they not the 25th of December in memory of his nativity? or is this not as deſerving of their grateful acknowledgment as that? Query 2. If *Quakers* in their commercial tranſactions obſerve the new-ſtile; tho' originally the work of a pope: why ſhould they, from a delicacy of conſcience, boggle at keeping the 25th of December holy; tho' it had been ſo too? or is the one not a matter of as great indifferency as the other? or is a uniformity in religious affairs not as becoming and even binding as in civil? Query 3. If, on pretence of the thing having been only temporary, *a church of England man* can warrant neglecting the unction for the ſick; tho' hinted at in the Goſpel, enjoined by St. James, and practiſed from the earlieſt antiquity: why, notwithſtanding ſuch reaſons, may *Quakers*, on the ſame pretence, not ſlight water-baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper? Query 4. Whether a thoro' reformation from the corruptions of Popery be not preferable to that which is done by halves? eſpecially when the ſame reaſons that brought about the reform of ſome points are equally cogent for that of others?

FINIS.

THE

REAL SEEKER.

PART II.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Letters, ſigned B—Z—B, from the Shades to Mr. W—m P——e, a noted Zealot within the Precinct of Temple-bar, which, I am credibly informed, and naturally apt to believe, were written with a View of bantering him out of his prieſt-catching Deportment, ſo diſgraceful to the Reformation, falling caſually into my Hands, I preſume to publiſh, with the additional View of their coming to the Knowledge of ſome Divine, who may think it worth his while to reſolve the doubts ſuggeſted thereby to the Diſadvantage of Proteſtancy: wherefore it is, that, anſwering the Purpoſe of my original *Real Seeking* Plan, I adopt and enumerate them as if my own, my Avidity for Information being ſuch, that I chearfully graſp at it from never ſo foul a Quarter.

LETTER XVI.

Hades, April 29, 1767.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I. I Make no doubt but your preſent efforts to traverſe and counteract the gigantick ſtrides taken by popiſh prieſts for propagating their moſt monſterous and irrational religious ſyſtem are thought the pure reſult of zeal: but if this be according to knowledge, or only the fruit of a miſtaken notion of the true intereſt of my kingdom, is what I much ſuſpect. It is true, after your having, by my grace, commenced doctor, I have no right to call your great ſhare of prudence and penetration in queſtion; but believe me, my dear child, the cleareſt ideas of mortals fall very ſhort of mine, which, beſides their being independant upon orgonical powers, thoſe great ſources of fallacy and deception, are ſupported by an experience coeval with the creation.

II. You ſurely muſt have heard, the grand objection to popery for better than two centuries was its hood-winking folks, not ſuffering them to ſee with their own eyes, nor matters to be determined by their own comments upon the ſcriptures; the diets of the empire, the colloquies and conferences of the weſtern world rung of nothing louder; ſo plauſible was the argument, that the rapid progreſs of the thrice happy reformation may well be aſcribed thereto.

III. Now, my dear child, alike cauſes being ever apt to produce alike effects, may we not apprehend, that your indictments, commitments, and trials of popiſh prieſts will prove fertile ſources

of their creed? that people will now cry out againſt ſuch proceedings, as they have formerly done againſt excommunications, inquiſitions, the rules of the index, &c? may we not expect that numbers, by the hubbub you make, will, what they perhaps had otherwiſe never dreamt of doing, thoro' curioſity, or a heartfelt compaſſion for their ſuffering fellow creatures, be induced to weigh the merits of popery? and perhaps, thoro' ſophiſtry and chicane, to embrace the ſame? or has the late R. S. not frankly owned his caſe to have been like this? will the ſly prieſt not take the opportunity of inſinuating, that proſecutions are ſet on foot in default of better reaſons? that this has been ever the caſe down from the confederacy of S—k—d to that of T——n, ſupported by a L—n A—z—n, under the maſk of a ſub-S—l G—k? and that the ſtale charge of diſloyalty and diſaffection are mere pretences, as in the courſe of your trials not a ſingle queſtion is put relative thereto, but barely to the maſſing prieſt?

IV. It is true, they are only the vulgar, who, I am apprehenſive, will make uſe of the argument; people of any liberal education, nay tolerable ſhare of but common ſenſe, muſt know better things; the votaries, as well of true as falſe religions, may uſe violent meaſures, and run unwarrantable lengths for their eſtabliſhment and ſupport. But, my dear child, you muſt underſtand, they are the vulgar alone I would make ſure of; liberty of conſcience and fair play, are their greateſt charms, and almoſt only reigning foibles, they never will heartily cloſe with ſuch as diſcountenance them; whereas people of rank have too many paſſions, ſhould they even apoſtatiſe from my banner, not to fall into one or other of the ſnares I lay for entrapping them.

V. Be

V. Be therefore aſſured, my dear child, that one argument of the rational kind, ſuch as I inſpired Luther with againſt the private maſs, or Zwinglius for the figurative preſence, would be worth ſhiploads of warrants. If the chiſel and ſaw have not qualified you, ſo as to have abilities enough to convince the minds of papiſts, ceaſe therefore from draining their purſes, and plagueing their bodies: it is true, you have the law on your ſide; but ſo has the drayman his whip, who is yet often cried ſhame at for belabouring his poor horſes withal. It is likewiſe true, you may get all the maſs-houſes in England baricadoed, and the laity as well as clergy proſecuted: but what would proteſtancy, with whoſe zeal you pretend to burn, get by that? is it certain, ſhould ſome future generations, by ſuch means heartily renounce their paternal religion, this would not be in favour of that, ſo much now in the mode, deiſm? or could you flatter yourſelf to be more ſucceſsful againſt infidelity, than the firſt planners of the reform, numbers of whoſe followers, as well as thoſe of other perſuaſions, not excepting, perhaps, the very papiſts, inſenſibly glide into a neglect, if not a contempt of poſitive laws, whilſt others lay the main ſtreſs of their duty in the obſervance thereof?

VI. I muſt own, it is to a great degree mortifying, that the canting trade you have lately taken up, has not, thoro' ſome fatality, had the wiſhed for ſucceſs, that a very reſpectable ſociety, from the unpromiſing proſpect of your prieſt-catching buſineſs, are like to courtail, if not quite withhold, your ordinary ſtipend, and that you are not in future like to be bribed into a peaceable comportment towards papiſts, for your having ſhamefully violated the ſolemn promiſe given thereof laſt year, in conſideration of the ſum of ten

guineas. But, my dear child, you muſt conſider that, though I ſhould be extremely glad your manner of holding forth had taken with the publick, that you were to be in fee with the *reforming* brotherhood for life, and were to have papiſts for your perpetual tributaries: yet it is far better pocket theſe diſappointments, than make bad worſe, by giving the curſedly blind mob ſo fair a handle. The leſſer evil to the greater, and the publick good to the private, ſhould, you know, be ever preferred.

VII. I therefore inſiſt, as you tender my friendſhip, what I have more than one reaſon to think you do, you will, on ſight of this, withdraw your ſeveral proſecutions, and, by way of caution to ſuch of my children as might be inclined to tread in your footſteps, and pretend ignorance; get this letter inſerted in the publick prints as ſoon as may be, as I ſhould be ſorry to wreak my indignation upon ſuch a darling of my whole court; and you muſt, to your coſt, find how terrible it is to fall in diſgrace with, and feel the weight of the immortal arm of

My dear child,

Your ever loving father,

not in the fleſh but ſpirit,

B—Z—B.

P. S. Should you not be inclined to relent for my ſake, I beg, my dear child, you will have an eye to your own honour. How ſcandalous muſt it not appear in you to be guilty of what you would condemn in others? what mortal could, without the imputation of blaſphemy, arrogate to himſelf a right of calling people to taſk for their way of thinking? muſt you not have a front of braſs

braſs to proſecute them for what you know nothing about? it is true you might have heard them in a variegated dreſs pronounce *Dominus vobiſcum*, *Orate Fratres*, *Ite miſſa eſt*, *&c.* but when aſked what theſe words mean, muſt you not be loſt to all ſhame, not to bluſh, nay ſink into the earth, upon ſaying to the judge, *no my Lord?* Fye then, my dear child, fye, fye; you might eaſily ſee, if not blind, as well to your own credit as mine, you ſhould long ſince have done with ſuch vile practices, and that, infamous as Jack-catch is, you muſt be more ſo; he only deſtroys the body, you would ruin both body and ſoul: in a word, whether it be your own ſeeking, or, what I am apt to think, that you are made a cat's paw herein, you are highly to blame, you ſhould have told your employers, they were to do their own dirty work. But what is worſt of all is, that I am apprehenſive both you and they will be deſervedly ranked by your very brethren with thoſe foxes and firebrands, thoſe Romiſh emiſſaries, who, to the great ſcandal of thouſands, uſed all their endeavours to propagate infidelity and ſow diſcord amongſt the members of the infant reformation, for in what manner ſoever people become diſguſted withal, is a matter of indifference, and that you contribute thereto, without perhaps meaning it, as much as thoſe incendiaries, one needs but read this letter to ſee.

LETTER XVII.

Hades May 11, 1767.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I. IT gives me no ſmall concern to ſee the little regard you pay to the admoniſhments of the

beſt meaning of parents. I intended before now beating up your quarters, by carrying into execution the menaces expreſſed in my laſt, and making you ſenſible, your refractorineſs was kicking againſt the prickles, had I not been controuled by him, who in the days of yore let me looſe at Job. That antient of days is too knowing not to ſee the advantages he reaps from your preſent manœuvres, and alas! too powerful for me to withſtand.

II. As ſenſible as he may be how deſtructive your ſteps are like to turn out to my cauſe, and thus unable to ſtop the progreſs thereof by open force, to ſupply this deficiency, I am forced to ſet my wits to work for an expedient, whereof it would go to my heart to make the trial, was it not for the hopes I conceive of preſerving thouſands by its means, for only the loſs of one man, whom I even ſtand the faireſt chance, from his pliableneſs to my beheſts in moſt other reſpects, of re-poſſeſſing in the end.

III. It is the only I ſee left, and no leſs than the fatal ſhift of turning advocate for popery, in hopes of deterring you, when once convinced of its being the only true ſyſtem of chriſtianity, or at leaſt, that you have no ſound reaſon to think it is not: for you muſt own that one's running counter to his own conſcience, argues him as much loſt to the ſenſe of all good, as if he had already been doubly damned, and of courſe, that you muſt be as good as ſuch, what I preſume you utterly abhor, ſhould you proceed with your proceſſes, without firſt giving ſatisfactory anſwers to the following queries.

IV. Query 1. Would you, or any of your proteſtant brethren, tamely give up the title to an eſtate, time immemorial in the poſſeſſion of your forefathers, without narrowly enquiring, and even being

being clear, how they legally went out of the family?

V. Query 2. Would you have the face to deny popery to have been the reigning religion in England for many centuries before the reformation?

VI. Query 3. What ſolid reaſon have you to think it has ſo eſſentially varied, as to have been deſervedly diſcarded ſince that time?

VII. No body would believe you, ſhould your anſwer to the firſt be in the affirmative. Hiſtory and the many, now extant, old remains of popery all over the land, would give you the lye, ſhould you ſay *yes* to the ſecond; the whole difficulty centers therefore in the third; now it is a matter of doubt with me, conſidering your whole education was but a little reading and writing, in which you have even made but a very indifferent progreſs, if you have a capacity ſufficient to comprehend the diſtinction that is uſually made betwixt old and new popery; (that was Rome's religious ſyſtem before, and this ſince, her pretended degeneracy) and if you have not hitherto taken your notion of papiſts upon truſt, the very practice you would condemn in them. And in the name of wonder, how could it be otherwiſe? could you really imagine that logical rules, and the art of thinking with exactneſs and preciſion, ſuch as are beautifully diſplayed in the enchainement (this d—— d French word is, my dear child, cramp I know; I had made uſe of *concatenation*, but that I apprehend it would prove equally perplexing to you: if it were better, as the phraſe is, to deal with a rogue than a fool, I ſhan't ſay; but ſure I am, I had rather, at any Time, indite a letter to a wit than a dunce) of Euclid's theorems, are indiſcriminately incident to all, however vulgar geniuſes, when ſeven years apprenticeſhip muſt be ſerved to a manual craft? or think the art of reaſoning well

not as requiſite for polemicks, as law or mathematicks?

VIII. But in caſe I ſhould be miſtaken, and you were ſo gifted with bright natural parts, as to be an exception to the general rule of claſſical breeding being neceſſary for literature, I ſhould be glad to be undeceived by your inſerting in the *Public Ledger*, a paper remarkable for its impartiality, and which you almoſt daily read, the reaſon why, inſtead of giving due weight to popery's preſcription and long poſſeſſion, you remain inviolably attached to proteſtancy, which will be the moſt likely means of ridding you of the importunities of,

My dear child,

your once loving,

but now jealous father,

not in the fleſh but ſpirit,

B—Z—B.

P. S. If you take no more notice of this letter than of the former, you will be wholly to blame, ſhould you and I be the table talk of the town: let me therefore have your reaſon, and you may depend upon all the honour of theſe ſubterraneous regions, that, beſides ourſelves, no body ſhall be the wiſer for our correſpondence: for though your letters may be made publick; mine, without which they will be unintelligible, will be directed to you alone. You may rely the more upon my word herein, as the publiſhing my pleas in behalf of popery might, through their irrefragableneſs, gain over ſuch numbers thereto as would render our worſhipping places almoſt deſerted,

ſerted, by men of parts at leaſt, the moſt fatal blow that could be given my intereſt upon earth. I ſhould be glad, to avoid prolixity, you would put this matter to the iſſue of a ſingle reaſon, and conſult others either of the new or old birth for the ſame, and make them acquainted with, and your aſſiſtants in the whole procedure; as you may with reaſon be diffident of your own abilities to engage in diſpute with ſo accompliſhed a veteran in ſophiſtry, as Luther has once aſperſed me.

LETTER XVIII.

Hades, May 22, 1767.

My dear Child,

I. ALTHOUGH I apprehend you mean treating me with contempt to the end of the chapter; yet, leſt you ſhould one day plead in your juſtification that, being a member of the goſpel covenant, you ſhould have been treated as ſuch, by having three warnings given you, ere your ſentence was pronounced; I condeſcend once more to the diſagreeable taſk of putting pen to paper, and, to obviate as much as poſſible all pretexts on your ſide, even furniſhing you with the moſt plauſible reaſon I have ever known aſſigned for ſpurning popery; yet ſhewing you at the ſame time its inſufficiency, to the end to make you ſenſible, if ſuſceptible of any rational impreſſion, you muſt expect, beſides your fate beyond the grave, to be tortured whilſt here with the gripes of your own however callous conſcience, in alluſion

ſion to both which ſuffering ſtates of a here and hereafter, I have, in caſe of your obſtinate perſeverance, pronounced you as good as doubly damned; the belying one's own conſcience being a ſtate of ſelf-contradiction is reckoned ſo revolting, that my deiſtical children acknowledge no other hell.

II. *Tranſubſtantiation* is the great ſtumbling block I mean, a tenet of all thoſe of popiſh invention, reckoned the moſt highly abſurd, as being not only beſide or above, but even diametrically contradictory to the evidence and teſtimony of our ſenſes: and indeed ſo ſhocking does it appear at firſt ſight, that one muſt have an uncommon ſhare of credulity, not to ſay enthuſiaſm, bigotry, and blind ſuperſtition; not to renounce for ever any communion where it is taught. What! not to believe one's own eyes; O dreadful ſtate of intellectual bondage! the more to be held in execration, as Chriſt appealed to the ſenſes for the truth of his riſen humanity, (Luke xxiv. 39.) and to his miracles, the objects of ſenſe, for that of his meſſiahſhip, (Joh. x. 38.) where I preſume you will own I preſs the argument to its utmoſt; and conſequently, ſhould I ſhew its fallacy, that thoſe urged againſt other popiſh tenets, whereof none appear near ſo ſhocking as this, ſtand but a bad chance.

III. But, my dear child, dreadful as ſuch a belief may appear, to ſhake off the yoke of but an apparently legal authority, the inevitable ſource of anarchy and confuſion, muſt be much more ſo; an expedient therefore never to be ventured upon unleſs in defence of an unqueſtionably eſſential truth; and ſuch, I fancy, may be eaſily made out not to be the caſe with the *impanation*: I own the ſenſes bear witneſs thereto: but who had not rather give them than Chriſt the lye? ſhould the king,

king, upon a poor peaſant's kiſſing his hand, ſay *thou art ſir John*, it muſt either be a lye, or the ſimple ſwain muſt thereby be dubbed a knight: *This is my body* muſt then have been a lye, or theſe words muſt have ſpoken the bread into Chriſt's body. And hence it is that, the difference is clear betwixt the caſes urged in the objection and this; for there the ſenſes might be believed without making Chriſt a lyar, although not ſo here. Where has he ever declared his humanity or miracles to be otherwiſe than what the ſenſes reported them to be, as he has ſaid this to be his body?

IV. It is true I formerly perſuaded Zwinglius that, to ſave the lye, it is enough, *this is my body* were only figuratively true, as the paſchal lamb was called the Lord's paſſover, (Exod. xii. 11.) though it was only a concomitant ſign, or token thereof, where you will ſay I flatly contradict myſelf. But, my dear child, there is a wide difference betwixt theſe two kinds of ſpeech: a general uſe and acceptation of words has authoriſed the one, but not the other. Should the maſter of the ordnance get the cannon drawn out and fired on the 4th of June, might he not truly ſay, *it is the king's birth-day?* but ſhould he, upon pulling an apple out of his pocket ſay, *this is the king*, he would be ſtared at as a romancing dotard; therefore when God ordered the Iſraelites to eat the paſchal lamb with guirt loins, ſhoes on their feet, ſtaves in their hands, ready for a march, he might truly ſay: *it* (whether underſtood of the paſchal lamb, which by the bye is called (Verſ. 27.) not the paſſover, but the ſacrifice thereof, of the whole ceremony or, which is moſt likely, of that very juncture of time) *is the paſſover*: though what Chriſt ſaid, unleſs literally true, had been a lye; as no cuſtom has ever prevailed, ſo as to verify a bit of bread, remaining bread, to be his body,

and

and that nothing went before to prepare people for its being only figuratively ſuch, as it was the caſe in the paſſover.

V. As to the charge of giving myſelf the lye, it is but the compliment I ſhould expect from the followers of him, who, inſpite of the acknowledgment I one day made of his divinity (Luke iv. 41.) would have paſſed me upon them for the father of lyes, (Joh. viii. 44.) and no more than uſing different means to promote, at all events, the intereſt of my kingdom, a practice much prevailing amongſt themſelves; witneſs their bribes, and other faſhionable uſages, in which they take after me, whereof yourſelf will afford a ſignal inſtance, ſhould you ſtill perſiſt in oppoſing the will of,

My dear child

your of late diſtruſtful father,

not in the fleſh but ſpirit,

B—Z—B.

P. S. I will give you till the laſt day of term to produce your reaſon, or reply to what I oppoſe to that here mentioned, on failure of which, you may expect by that time that I ſhall, ſore however againſt my will, refer your caſe to others, who, from the diſinclination you ſhew of having your religious thoughts brought to the light of a fair ſcrutiny, may one day deſervedly tax you to your face with being a true ſon of darkneſs.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

Hades, June 20, 1767.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I. I No ſooner eſpied in the *Public Advertiſer* of the 4th inſtant, the notice given of *An Addreſs to the Britiſh Romaniſts, by a Layman of the Church of England, (Rivington)* than it immediately ſtruck me, it was of your contrivance, by way of anſwering what you were called upon to do in my ſecond letter, not that I could have imagined you were equal even to ſo ſuperficial a piece, (no, no, my dear child, the Lord help you) or that your narrow heart would have given it *gratis*, as it was to papiſts; but that, being well acquainted with your irreconcilably vindictive ſoul, you might have ſet ſome more *able* and *diſintereſted hand to work.*

II. However it be with this hypotheſis, as the author has not thought proper to individuate his ſignature, I will addreſs myſelf to you, as if you had been the man, where I muſt obſerve by the bye, I ſhould be much better pleaſed to ſee Romaniſts, inſtead of launching out into vague invectives, fight their own battles: this indeed, they pretend to have been done over and over to their hand, but unleſs they ſpecify where, you have a right to withhold your aſſent, and be of opinion with me, contrary to the vulgarly received, that the progreſs ſo much exaggerated of popery, is rather owing to what Chriſt foretold of its ſtability, or the clancular ſuggeſtions to that ſo much complained of blind obedience, than the ſuperior, or more fairly exerted abilities of its preſent

ſent ſet of Bonzes, who, inſtead of referring their opponents to the fates of thoſe Sampſons, long ſince, for the moſt part, mouldered to duſt, ſhould; not act offenſively, as is the now practice, by aſperſing the foe; but, in imitation of the antient apologiſts for chriſtianity, never ceaſe repelling whilſt the attacks were renewed. Whence I am ſorry to conclude, popery muſt be everlaſtingly unſhaken, for though, like the Jews, by the ſtratagem of wicked Balaam, (Num. xxxi. 16.) its choice profeſſors, from their griping after the good things of this life, the greateſt bane of churchmen, may often have ſuch difficulties to encounter as ſeem to threaten its utter ſubverſion; yet the calamity can, I fear, be but temporary.

III. But digreſſions apart, you may reſt ſatisfied, my dear child, that too conſcious of the account I find in mens liberty of thought, and *enquiring into things of a religious concern*, I am as warm an advocate for both as any goſpel-monger upon earth: but cannot ſee why in intricate caſes, at leaſt, they ſhould not have their boundaries, or why they ſhould be more unreſtrained here than in matters of property, where, were our thoughts ſubject to human controul, we would not be allowed to impeach, even in our hearts, the ſentence coming from the bench: the parallel therefore muſt hold good, unleſs the authority of the ſpiritual judge ſhould chance to be ſuſpicious, or its exertion indiſputably overſtrained.

IV. That the latter was the caſe with the Roman pontiffs, in their dogmatical deciſions, ſhould, methinks, have been your buſineſs to ſhew; that the former is not may be thus briefly evinced, that, barring the followers of Photius, Luther, and ſome acknowledged hereſiarchs, very few, if any, ever diſputed their right of pronouncing in all momentous controverſies of the ſpiritual kind, wit-

witneſs their having been in the uninterrupted poſſeſſion of the practice from Victor the firſt, in the ſecond, to Clement the thirteenth, in the eighteenth century.

V. Nor is the countenance of ſcripture wanting herein; in what other ſenſe Peter could have been truly called the *rock*, upon which the church was one day to be built, unleſs by his upholding her in the ſteady belief of ſound doctrine, or ſhe an everlaſting proof againſt hell-gates without his (her foundation) being ſo too, either in his perſon or ſucceſſors, I cannot conceive.

VI. This, duly conſidered, will, I fancy, be alone ſufficient to convince you, that all the pains taken in this thought doughty performance, tend only to kick up a little duſt; for to enumerate in due order its objections to Pius's creed, the butt levelled at therein.--- 1. Why may Rome, for adminiſtering the milk of ſound documents, not be the mother-church; though Jeruſalem were ſo, for the goſpel having been firſt preached there? or may the king, who is the father of the whole Nation, not be that of his own mother?---2. Might this her prerogative not be avowedly indiſputable; though not expreſsly claimed, in the apoſtolick and primitive times, when all was unanimity? or does it ſhew a diffidence of a title, not to be aſſerted when not controverted?---3. Is it certain, precedence was antiently granted to popes in conſideration of the imperial ſee, or for their being Peter's ſucceſſors? that immediately upon that ſee being removed to Conſtantinople, its patriarch vied with them for precedence? or that, better than five hundred years after, till Photius, or perhaps ſeven hundred, till Michael Cerularius it was not diſputed?---4. Would the text forbidding the love of pre-eminence in the ſenſe here taken, not reduce all the ranks in the church

to

to the ſtate of levellers?---5. Was the ratifying in heaven the miniſtry of the other apoſtles of the ſame import as giving them the keys the ſame as to Peter? or might that not be, though they had been ſubordinate to him?---6. Is what is urged againſt the conſequence of Peter being the rock not obviated by what was ſaid Numb. 2? Is it ſure, what is here ſuggeſted, that the other apoſtles have in any occurrence refuſed obedience to Peter? or might it not be, they were all ſo ready in the diſcharge of every duty, and that their hands were otherwiſe ſo full in thoſe boiſterous times, that he had no call to ſtand to his authority?---7. May Rome not be infected with *avarice*, *craftineſs* and *ambition*; yet, the only thing degrading her motherhood, not have any tenet licenſing the ſame?---8. Was pagan Rome not part of the empire, yet miſtreſs of the whole? why may it not be ſo with popiſh Rome?---9. Is it ſo very plain, Rome's peculiar doctrines are contrary to thoſe of the apoſtles?---10. May it not ſuffice, to warrant the taking the oath of the pope's ſupremacy, that conſtant tradition has atteſted Peter's having fixed his reſidence, and died at Rome; tho' neither Babylon might ſignify Rome, nor any text of ſcripture imply, that he was ever there? or may other oaths not equally depend upon as great uncertainties, for inſtance, a perſon's legitimacy, and yet be warrantably taken?---11. Why might there not be an appeal from John to Peter's ſucceſſors? or might there not be one lodged from the uncle to the nephew, raiſed in right of his father to a more elevated ſtation? or, ſhould we reject tradition, how ſhould we know that John ſurvived Peter?---12. Is the ſucceſſion of popes not as well aſcertained as any other whatſoever? does *Prideaux*, and other proteſtant hiſtorians, not trace the eccleſiaſtical hierarchy thorough them from

from Chriſt to their own times? ſhould the chaſms that happened therein, through interregnums, or different pretenſions to the Tiara, not, comparatively ſpeaking, be reckoned too trifling to demoliſh ſo long a chain, eſpecially if the purity of doctrine was not thereby affected? if the Jews' hiſtory depends upon their own veracity, why ſhould popiſh vouchers not be truſted here, eſpecially as there were no proteſtants then extant, to be relied upon?

VII. Now, my dear child, I preſume, unleſs you anſwer theſe queries to ſatisfaction in the proteſtant way, you muſt own the maternity of Rome and ſupremacy of her even now biſhop, are not liable to ſuch uncertainties as you might imagine, unleſs you would expoſe our own favourite rule, the ſcripture, to be buried in the ſame duſt: for who does not ſee, that its antiquity, authenticknefs, genuine ſenſe, notwithſtanding its different readings, &c. being only aſcertained by hiſtory and tradition, muſt be as precarious as any of theſe points?

VIII. As to your manner of contraſting the popiſh creed with the texts of ſcripture, you ſhould have put the following queſtions to yourſelf before you had taken the pains.---1. Is it a plain caſe, the popes lead people into error? deſtroy their paths? ſpeak not according to the law and teſtimony? or are wolves in ſheep's cloathing?---2. That reading the ſcriptures is in all caſes ſo indiſpenſible as to render the 4th rule of the index unjuſtifiable? may people not be obliged to read them, and yet, upon difficulties ariſing about their meaning, to abide by that of Rome, or the fathers, when unanimous? or infine.---3. That ſuch as depend upon their own conceptions of things, are better qualified to give an account of the hope that is in them, than ſuch as are led by the ſenſe of anti-

quity, the council and pope? or may we not ſee many objects better by the help of a glaſs, than with the naked eye?

IX. Here, my dear child, to conclude, you ſee what work you have cut out for yourſelf; this is what you have got by your obſtinacy to my advice of confining yourſelf to a ſingle point, inſtead of giving room to this heap of queries: it is not too late; pitch upon that you would have diſcuſſed above all the reſt, and I am your man; produce your reaſons in the *Public Ledger* for your part of the alternative; otherwiſe you muſt agree, that your preaching up a freedom of enquiry is mere grimace, or only intended for papiſts, whilſt as to the *underſtanding*, yourſelf remains a fettered ſlave: I conjure you therefore, to uſe your own pithy expreſſions, that for my ſake, your honour, your duty, your intereſt, you would comply with what I have all this time been preſſing you to, *viz.* think for yourſelf and not by proxy, look upon the boaſted ſound of liberty as a bubble, unleſs reduced to practice, and the binding a burthen upon other peoples ſhoulders, which you would not ſet your own finger to move, as ungenerous and tyrannical, the only means of regaining the favour of,

My dear child,

your ever loving father,

not in the fleſh but ſpirit,

B---Z---B.

The following forms of popiſh excommunications I inſert here, as the next letter attempts the juſtification thereof, if not ſuppoſititious.

For

For the Public Ledger, *March* 27, 1767.

I. SOME years ago, was publiſhed in Dublin *A Treatiſe concerning the Diſcipline of the People called Quakers, by John Rutty*, which does great honour to that people, and is worthy the attention of other chriſtian ſocieties. In this treatiſe are contraſted two forms of excommunication, highly curious and genuine, one of the Quaker's church, and the other of the Roman Catholic church; which of them approaches neareſt the true ſpirit of chriſtianity, your readers will judge, if you will pleaſe to allow them a place in your valuable paper.

I am, ſir, &c.

No QUAKER.

The form of a Quaker Excommunication, for marrying with a man of a different perſuaſion.

II. Whereas E. B. daughter of B. C. deceaſed was educated in the profeſſion of us, the people called Quakers, and did ſometimes frequent our religious meetings, but for want of a faithful adherence to the dictates of that divine principle, which was ſufficient to have preſerved her in a due obſervance of the divine command, "Honour thy father and mother, &c. as well as the known rules of our ſociety, hath been prevailed on to ſuffer herſelf to be joined in marriage, by a prieſt, to a man of a different perſuaſion in matters of faith, and without her mother's conſent; we do therefore hereby diſown the ſaid E. B. to be of our ſociety, untill ſhe comes to witneſs that godly ſorrow, which worketh true repentance, which that the Lord may mercifully grant her, is our ſincere deſire.

Signed in Dublin, the 22d of the 11th month, 1744, by

Peter Judd,	Henry Pemberton,
Daniel Bewly,	John Rutty,
Gerret Haſſon,	James Johnſon,
Thomas Martin,	Francis Ruſſel.
John Barclay,	

The form of a Romiſh Excommunication.

III. By the authority of God the Father Almighty, the Bleſſed Virgin, St. Mary, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the Holy Saints;

We excommunicate, utterly curſe, bann, commit, and deliver to the Devil of Hell, F---s F---n, late of Dublin, now of T---k---lls in the county of W---w, that hath in ſpight of God, St. Peter, and all the Holy Saints, and in ſpight of our Holy Father the Pope, God's Vicar here on earth, and in ſpight of our Right Reverend Father, our Dioceſan, and worſhipful Canons, who ſerve God daily, apoſtatized to a moſt damnable religion, full of hereſy and blaſphemy; excommunicated for ever let him be, and delivered over to the Devil in hell as a perpetual malefactor and ſchiſmatick: accurſed may he be in all cities, and in all towns, fields, highways, yards and houſes, and in all other places, whether lying or riſing, walking or running, leaning or ſtanding, waking or ſleeping, eating or drinking, and whatſoever thing he does beſides. We ſeparate him from the fold, and all the good prayers of the church, from the participation of the holy Jeſus, from all ſacraments, chapels, and altars, from holy bread and holy water, and from all the merits of God's holy Prieſts and religious men, and all our cloyſters, from all pardon and privilege of Rights and Immunities, which all

all the holy Fathers have, and the Popes have given them; and we give him over abſolutely to the power of the Fiend, and let him quench his ſoul, when dead, in flames of hell fire, as this candle is now quenched and put out by us. And let us pray God, our Lady, St. Peter and St. Paul, that his eyes may be put out in this world, as this candle is: Let us pray God that all his ſenſes of his body may fail him, as the light of this candle doth, except he comes on ſight hereof, and openly confeſſes his damnable hereſy and blaſphemy, and by repentance, as much as in him lies, make ſatisfaction to God, our Lady, St. Peter, and St. Paul, and the worſhipful company of this church; and as the ſtaff of this holy croſs now falls down, ſo may he, except he recants and repents.

P---D---n, Bp.
B---M---r, Regr.

July 18, 1733.

Dublin, printed in the year 1736.

From the *Alarm of the Little Engliſh Carpenter*, p. 21. (*Cooke.*)

The following is a part of the pope's dreadful curſe againſt heretics, which begins in this manner.

BY the authority of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, and the holy Canons, &c. May the holy eternal Virgin Mary, mother of God, curſe him or them wherever they

be, whether in the houſe or in the field, or in the highway, or in the path, or in the wood, or in the water, or in the church. May he or they be curſed in living, in dying, in eating, in drinking, in being hungry, in being thirſty, in p---g, in ſh---g, (theſe words are ſhameleſsly put at full length in the original, which yet would bring a bluſh into a hottentot's face) in blood-letting. May he or they be curſed in the hair of their head, in their brain, in the top of their head, in their temples, in their forehead, in their ears, in their eyebrows, in their cheeks, in their jaw-bones. May they be curſed from the top of their head to the ſole of their feet. May there not be any ſoundneſs in them.

LETTER XX.

Hades, July 1, 1767.

MY DEAR CHILD,

I. THREE days after the *Addreſs* I found your *Alarm* advertiſed, both which I ſhould have republiſhed, were they not ſo long, and not to be met with where advertiſed: it is a maſterpiece in its kind. Had you not expreſsly avowed it, I had not been long at a loſs for the author, being, if not the ſame, at leaſt of *Young Anti-papiſta*'s turn: (54. 1.) it convinces me more and more, that the idea I have hitherto entertained of your debility of parts, is far ſhort of the original, inſomuch that I am as nonpluſed to go about anſwering it as his majeſty's regular troops were how to engage the ſavage buſh-fighting Americans. Not to mention its many grammatical inaccuracies and tautological exclamations, uttered with all the malignant acrimony and virulence a grovelling heart could conceive, ſuch as, *O helliſh religion! helliſh crew! bloody papiſts! ſcarlet whore! devil's vicegerent! away to hell your native place, &c.* a language generally the fruit of diſappointed ſpleen, and never heard but amongſt my ſable guards; not to mention this I ſay,

II. 1. Why have you not produced thoſe threatening letters you mention, to let the world ſee if they merit the ſtigma? Is your not offering a reward for detecting the author, not a ſtrong indication of the calumny? Can we ſuppoſe a profeſſed informer ſo unreſenting, and indued with ſuch a ſhare of chriſtian lenity, as to take no ſteps to bring ſuch an incendiary to juſtice?---Why

have you not alledged, inſtead of thoſe ſcenes of blood and acts of cruelty, which ſhould only reflect upon the perpetrators thereof, and are ſo liable to retortion and recrimination, ſome one popiſh dogmatical principle encouraging the ſame; or in anywiſe prejudicial to ſociety? And where it has been made ſuch?---3. Is it not a proof of your form of excommunication being exaggerated, or wholly forged, that you do not quote where it is to be met with in any popiſh ritual? And that it remarkably differs from that here inſerted from the *Ledger*, though reckoned the ſame? And after all, what were theſe curſes, even if true, which is not at all unlikely, after what paſſed on the confirmation of *Magna Charta*, in theſe words: *Let him be extinguiſhed like theſe candles, and ſtink in hell, who violates this charter*; what were theſe, I ſay, more than what Paul did in a ſummary way, by delivering the delinquent to Satan (1 Cor. v. 5.)? what dreadful epithets does Jude not beſtow upon falſe teachers? Did Chriſt not pronounce the phariſees the offspring of the very devil (Joh. viii. 44.)? Does the royal pſalmiſt not make uſe of the like, if not more horrid imprecations (Pſ. cix.)?

III. I muſt own, that to curſe a *dying* perſon, or *quench his ſoul*, when dead, *in hell*, as is here done, appears ſhocking beyond expreſſion, as it ſeems to imply the irremiſſable crime of final impenitence and effectual damnation. But this, my dear child, is miſtaking the matter: church-cenſures do not always pre-ſuppoſe, but only preſume a real crime; nor, even then is there any power upon earth but that of one's own conſcience to render it damning or irremiſſable. Who could ever imagine that the effect intended by excommunications, is the dooming men to hell? Or that this could be the conſequence thereof, without real perſonal guilt? So far from it, that ſhould theſe bolts be darted with

with undiſcerning temerity, like the diſciple's peace, (Mat. x. 13) they would return from whence they came. Theſe expreſſions are therefore only comminatory, meant by a kind of pious fraud, for reclaiming ſuch as they affect, or ſtriking terror into others: the laſt ſeems to be the caſe here, or when they are uttered againſt people in their graves. Pray what other reaſon can there be for burying a ſuicide in a croſs road with a ſtake thorough his body, or hanging a man in effigy? But ſhould even this be thought ridiculouſly barbarous, you ſhould know they are only diſcipline points, which may be altered according to the times and people's tempers, and conſequently ſhould never break ſquares; does the Quakers' form of excommunication not therefore betray a miſtruſt of their diſability of brandiſhing the ſpiritual ſword, when they would not, on pretence of chriſtian meekneſs, copy after ſuch originals? Does their doing no more to the tranſgreſſors of their rules, than free-maſons and other ſuch clubs do, not ſhew they are but ſuch another aſſociation? Or does their conduct herein ſavour more of the ſpirit of chriſtianity than that of Papiſts?

IV. What I have been taking you to taſk for hitherto I ſhould be inclined to believe the effect of extreme ignorance, did I not find your diſingenuity, not to ſay malice prepenſe, to be, if poſſible, in ſtill a ſuperior degree.---4. How could you have the face to act the inſipidly dull humouriſt, (which by this ſample you ſeem as ill qualified to perſonate as the divine) in diſparagement of tranſubſtantiation, without once taking notice of what I wrote to you on that head (See 138. ii.)? I am indeed pretty ſure you did not well underſtand it, but ſhould you not have ſaid ſo? If Chriſt's humanity, though joined to the divinity, was ſuſceptible of cold, hunger, &c. why ſhould it be ſuch

ſtuff,

ſtuff, that the ſpecies were ſo of moiſture?---5. might you not ſee, if not ſtupidly blind, that the printer's declining any further inſertions againſt popery, was owing either to the vileneſs of ſuch witleſs productions as your's, enough to diſgrace the beſt of cauſes, or that, its defence being taken amiſs, he thought it highly ungenerous in a country of liberty, to hold it up as a butt to all the enemy's venemous darts.---6. Is your looking on the diſgrace of the Jeſuits as a feint, becauſe they are of the ſame religion with their perſecutors, not a proof of your incapacity to judge with any degree of exactneſs, in the moſt common occurrences of life? Or could it enter into any head but ſuch as your's, there could be no quarrel but on the ſcore of religion? It is poſſible this might be the caſe in France, but that it was ſo in Portugal and Spain is not at all likely. Be that as it may, a little time will ſhew if the thing was a ſham, or if ſuch ſwarms are lately flown hither from the continent, as you and newſpapers would pretend, which will appear from the preſent enrollment calculated, as the report is, for their detection.

V. As to the form of *confeſſion* impoſed by the popiſh prieſts in Ireland, agreeable to the bull of excommunication of ſuch as ſhould own the king's ſupremacy.---7. Why have you not ſhewn that injunction, even if literally true, ſhould be a rule to the preſent generation? where in the decretals, extravagants, or great bullarium is the conſtitution to be ſeen, which aſſerts the regality of St. Peter, or the pope's temporal and civil ſupreme power? or, ſhould this be allowed matter of fact, which is not at all incredible after *ecce duo gladij* has been claimed as a motto, was it perpetually to be in force? or may oaths relating to diſcipline, like excommunications, not be new modelled or diſuſed, according to the exigencies of things?

And

And thus, by means of a few queries, is the grand bulwark you have long threatened papiſts with, levelled with the ground by,

My dear child,

your ever loving father,

not in the fleſh but ſpirit,

B---Z---B.

P. S. Adieu my dear child, you will probably hear no more of me untill our meeting on the curlingly flaming Tartarian lake, where, contrary to your notion of Chriſt's kingdom, you will wofully find, merit amply rewarded. Your pretenſions of having been proof againſt bribery, and being purely actuated by zeal for your country, though credited in an earthly court, will not avail you there; the ten guineas will appear in judgment againſt you, as will much larger ſums tendered you by ſ——d hands. Were you and brethren impreſſed with the awful notion the Alcoran gives of that dreadful day, your lips had never betrayed your heart, nor gained credit before any bench; and in ſober ſadneſs how could you pretend to make people believe you are a ſingular inſtance of diſintereſtedneſs in ſerving your country, ſo as to ſacrifice the time neceſſary for your ſupport by induſtry, to the promoting of its pretended wellfare? Had your fellow craftſmen in the ſervice of the great Diana, not apprehended to be ſufferers by the downfall of her worſhip, their publick ſpirit never had carried them to ſuch violence againſt St. Paul and companions, (Acts xix 29.) who could therefore ſuſpect that without the apprehenſion of any detriment, or hopes of any emo-

emolument to yourſelf, you ſhould be ſuch a ſanguine proſecutor of popery? St. Paul indeed was ſuch of chriſtianity; (Gal. i. 13.) but, my dear child, what are you to St. Paul? or St. Paul to you? Have you had the ſame means of conviction that proteſtancy is from God, as he that judaiſm was? So far from it that I much doubt if in many points you could ſhew the difference 'twixt it and popery, and hence it is that as Caiphas was leſs excuſable than Pilate, (Joh. xix. 11.) or perhaps Judas, ſo it is with you and inſtigator from behind the curtain, whoſe character the means of conviction, in imitation of the late Dr. S---l---k, and lenity would much better ſuit, than compulſion and ſeverity.

This is the laſt of the letters mentioned in the advertiſement, and indeed if we may depend upon what the author of the following ſays of a gentleman, who was an ornament to his country, viz. that *force makes but hypocrites, none but hypocrites, politicians, or ignorant bigots, are advocates for religious conſtraint; that no man is ſo black and wicked as he who, thinking to do God ſervice, would cramp, oppreſs, or deſtroy his inoffenſive, but diſſenting fellow-men, &c.* If we may depend upon this, I ſay, it is hard to ſee how, without incurring theſe infamous charges, any one could patroniſe the *little Engliſh carpenter:* it is inverting the order of things to condemn people without a legal trial, which I ſuppoſe here to be effectually proving them in error. One may as well, with the king of Spain arbitrarily condemn folks without aſſigning any cauſe, as not put its reality beyond all doubt, after ſpecifying it: that this has already been done I ſhall believe when I have ſeen a ſatisfactory and irrefragable anſwer to the *Jew Apologiſt*; then and not before ſhall I, in proof of my much ſuſpected ſincerity, pledge the

little

little honour I am poſſeſſed of for my heartily embracing, and as ſtrenuouſly abetting the proteſtant ſyſtem, as I hitherto might have appeared ſanguine to ſome in defence of popery.

For the Public Ledger. *March* 27, 1767.

Sentiments of union in religion; by a late great Author, and ornament to his country.

I. REligion, which is obedience to the will of the Creator, as far as known to us, is a matter merely perſonal. What is true religion to one man, may not be ſuch to another, becauſe all have not the ſame talents and opportunities of enquiry and information.

II. Men cannot avoid thinking differently in religious matters, if they think at all. No one, properly ſpeaking, can be born of any religion. For no one can chuſe his religion for another.

III. For a Man to change his religious opinions upon due enquiry, is to become wiſer to-day than he was yeſterday.

IV. No one can be forced to be of any religion. He may be forced to profeſs outwardly to be an hypocrite. None but hypocrites, or politicians, or ignorant bigots, are advocates for force and conſtraint in religion.

V. In matters of religion and conſcience, no one has any ſuperior upon earth. Teachers and miniſters may charitably adviſe the willing and ignorant, but have no other authority. Civil governors have no right to impoſe what religion they pleaſe upon their people, who are as free to chuſe as themſelves, in that reſpect. Otherwiſe a man would have his religion to change with the country or climate.

VI. It

VI. It is not, as many ignorantly ſuppoſe, the greater body of Chriſtians, for inſtance, in this country of ours, that *tolerates* the leſſer and differing religious ſocieties; but the ſtate, which tolerates and gives protection to them all.

VII. And all religious ſocieties have a right to be tolerated and protected, which hold no opinions or practices detrimental to the public weal. But thoſe moſt eſpecially are entitled to no toleration, who will not acknowledge and teach the duty of tolerating others. Not to allow the fulleſt liberty of conſcience, is the greateſt injury to men, and impiety to their Maker.

VIII. No men ſo wicked and black as thoſe who have pretended, in the name of the Lord, or thinking thereby to do God ſervice, to cramp, oppreſs, or deſtroy their inoffenſive but differing fellow-men.

ALETHES.

LETTER XXI.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger.

July 8, 1767.

SIR,

I. WHAT the title of this letter promiſes, if duly performed, were, I muſt own, a moſt deſirable object: what could be more ſo to the human ſpecies in general, if ſenſible of their real intereſt, than to prevent the numberleſs evils proceeding from religious diſunion? Were we to enumerate all the feuds, from the domeſtic to the imperial, that hitherto happened in the world, I fancy by far the major part would be found to have flowed from this unhappy ſource: the diſcovery

very of a remedy would, therefore, be of unſpeakable ſervice, even ſhould the union be brought about at the expence of ſome truths, which, conſidering the preſent ſtate of things, may ſometimes be more laudably ſacrificed to good harmony, than too ſcrupulouſly adhered to, the ſame as the unanimouſly carrying a concerted plan of operations, tho' faulty, into execution may in general be preferrable to every chieftain going his own way to work, tho' upon a more *plauſible ſcheme.*

II. But the misfortune of this gentleman is, that he miſtakes the union of people's bodies for that of religion, which is an endowment of the mind: a freedom of thought, and a general toleration of ſuch as *hold no opinions or practices detrimental to the public weal, and will acknowledge and teach the duty of tolerating others*; the only point he pleads for, is, I own, what would much conduce to promote the former, but will no more bring about a union of hearts, than the clean and unclean beaſts became the ſame ſpecies from being pent up in Noah's ark; ſo far from it, that, as anomalous mungrels ſpring oftentimes from the aſſemblage of wild beaſts at the watering places of the torrid zone, ſo would probably be the caſe here: and upon this diſtinction depends the judgment we are to form of the late Pruſſian toleration, relative to a cordial religious union; its baſis and real motive time alone can ſhew.

III. I am as warm an advocate for toleration as this gentleman may be for his life, but then it is for the ſake of enjoying a liberty of enquiry, and coming, upon conviction, or, this being found impracticable, in a legally authoritative way, to a unity of religious ſentiments: he ſhould have ſhewn that, as well in ſubmiſſion to the laws of government, as *obedience to the will of the Creator*, people ſhould be allowed to differ in opinion, and act accordingly:

cordingly: inſomuch, that what is ſubmiſſion to one may not be ſo to another, all not having the *ſame talents and opportunities of information:* that no no one is born of a country, and that, of courſe, *all men not judging alike*, in point of ſubmiſſion, no one ſhould dictate to, or chuſe for another herein: he ſhould firſt have ſhewn, I ſay, ſuch poſitions would have been reliſhed by government, before he determined, that, in reference to a religious union, they could be ſo to the Creator. Conſtraint is my averſion; but I cannot conceive how, without it, or a fair enquiry, the union could be brought about: the firſt ſet, may, indeed, be hypocrites, but does it follow future generations muſt be ſo?

IV. However, therefore, he might be an ornament to his country in other reſpects, I fancy he could never be reckoned ſuch here, to reaſon or even common ſenſe: he might, for aught I know, be well qualified for the diſcuſſion of natural, political, and moral topics; but from his prejudice of education, or conceit of his intellectual abilities, might be an incompetent judge, where, not reaſon and paſſion, but faith and charity, are to have the lead. It muſt be owing to thoſe vitiated ſources, that he ſuggeſts, ſome opinions of popery, ſuch as that of not tolerating other perſuaſions (80. 5.) detrimental to the common weal, without ſhewing them to be dogmatical, the only reflecting upon its orthodoxy, or degrading its chiefs. But as I cannot in reaſon expect to be thought exempt from the foibles I charge upon him, it is, Mr. Printer, ſubmitted to you, if my plan for a union in religion (113. V.) be not, of the two, the more eligible.

Your's, &c.

A real Seeker.

LET-

LETTER XXII.

'Change Alley, July 16, 1767.

To the Rev. Matthew Taylor, D. D. *author of* England's Bloody Tribunal. *(Pridden.)*

SIR,

HOwever laudable I may reckon your view, yet the changes rung by the little Engliſh Carpenter (page 21.) upon this your performance, leaving no room to doubt of his being egged on thereby to the indulging his perſecuting vein, of whoſe miſchievous tendency you muſt be aware, from what you relate of one *Joice* (page 335) and others, who, moved by the tortures of its votaries, embraced the reformation, I cannot applaud the ſame; eſpecially as I find the arguments ſo inconcluſive, that I am amazed how any D. D. could adopt, and lend his name to ſo flimſy a piece, capable of making an impreſſion, but upon ſuch as your panegyriſt, or ſome pretended divines, who, to their ſhame, weigh the merits of a performance, not from the cloſeneſs of its reaſoning, but from their pre-poſſeſſion in favour of the author, his ſmooth-flowing ſtyle, or the cauſe he handles.

II.---1. What does your large catalogue of proteſtant martyrs avail, unleſs miracles, or invincible arguments, have fixed the ſtamp of juſtice and truth upon the cauſe they died in? Have Jordanus Brunus and Vanini, with ſeemingly as much compoſure and fortitude as any of them, not ſurrendered their ſouls in defence of atheiſm?---2. If the facetious Sir Thomas Moore is not to be dignified with the

crown of martyrdom, why ſhould ſuch a humouriſt to the very laſt as Rowland Taylor? (page 32.) —3. Is Cranmer to be put in the liſt, who would have aboliſhed all church juriſdiction? (p. 154)? Who has got John Bocher burnt (p. 158)? belied his own conſcience, by acknowledging Jane Grey (p. 136)? and ſubſcribing popery (p. 182)? could any thing leſs than a divine voucher convince us, that a thief, however penitent, ſhould, upon his diſſolution, be wrapt into immediate bliſs, and dubb'd a ſaint (Luke 23. 43)?—4. Were Robert Farrar, Biſhop of St. David's, being motionleſs in the flames, (p. 40.) Morgan's, Jane Grey's judge, dying mad, (p. 214.) the ſweating ſickneſs, and other calamities following upon Bucer's death, (p. 406.) Gardiner's nauſeous diſeaſe, (p. 412.) the ſun's eclipſe, if true, upon Huſs's death, (p. 434.) to be looked upon as miraculous? Or Latimer's preſaging his own (p. 113.) as prophetical?

III. To come to your *refutation* of popiſh errors.—1. Is it evident the fourth rule of the index forbids the promiſcuous reading of ſcripture, with a view of palming human devices upon the world inſtead of God's ordinances? Or rather, to obviate the fatal abuſe conſequent upon ſuch lectures (ſee 3, 13, 46)?—2. If the eſtabliſhed church makes uſe of the ſign of the croſs in baptiſm, without its being enjoined in ſcripture, why may Rome not of oil, ſalt, and ſpittle?—3. Why have you not proved, that, by Chriſt's inſtitution, both kinds are indiſpenſibly neceſſary to all? That the wafer ſhould be broken for the laity? That they ſhould feed themſelves with all? And that it ſhould be of the ſame ſize for them as the prieſt (ſee 6. 8. 47)? ſhould the repetition of the Maſs be a diſcount upon the excellency of the croſs, beyond the Levitical ſacrifices, or its ſufficiency, when the victim and chief ſacrificer are on both ſides the ſame,

and

and the virtue here is derived from thence; whereas, in the Jew-diſpenſation, all theſe were different (ſee 6. 11. 92)? Why have you not proved the prieſt incapable of offering Chriſt? or needs this imply any more, than that God would deign to hear him thoro' the hoſt he holds in his hands?— 4. Is there not a figure called *methonimy* in rhetoric that takes the *cup* (Luke 22. 20.) for what it is known to contain? Now where is the figure that takes a bit of bread for Chriſt's body? The proof you require of ſwallowing the cup as tranſubſtantiated into Chriſt's blood is therefore ſilly. Are *I am the vine* (John 15. 5.) and *this is my body*, of the ſame force? beſides the pronoun *this* being more determined to one meaning than the article *the*, has Chriſt not prepared us for, and explained the figurative ſignification there? But has he done ſo here? Altho' St. Paul ſays, *we being many are one bread* (1 Cor. 10. 17.) it does indeed not follow, we are tranſubſtantiated into bread; but does he not ſpeak ſo becauſe we *partake* of the ſame bread (ver. 16)? When he ſays, he *fed the Corinthians with milk* (1 Cor. 21. 2.) is the metaphor not plain? and that *Chriſt made our peace thro' the blood of his croſs* (Col. 1. 20.) Is it not ſo, that he meant the blood ſpilt on the croſs? as when we ſay, the work of the ſixth day of the creation, we mean the work, not of, but done on that day; and indeed, had Chriſt's expreſſion been figurative, it is ſtrange Paul, otherwiſe ſo liberal of his allegories, would have ſpoke ſo literally (1 Cor. 11. 24.) and not explained the figure. As to the ends of this inſtitution, *viz.* the uniting many Chriſtians into one body, the conferring of grace and acknowledging the benefits reaped by Chriſt's death; if they could be obtained without the corporal, ſo could they without the myſtical preſence of Chriſt. Moreover, thus we might ex-

plode water-baptiſm, as that of the ſpirit alone might ſuffice.

IV.—5. Is it certain, the view of papiſts in maintaining a purgatory, is to reconcile a wicked life with the hopes of heaven? Or does this place of purgation, like ſeptennial tranſportations, not rather deter from wicked courſes? If *as the tree falleth, ſo it lyeth*, be of any force: therefore the materialiſt is right, who ſays, both ſoul and body remain where the man dies. Were a gaoler to tell his priſoner for life, you ſhall not go out until you have paid your fees; would it not be nonſenſe? Why therefore ſhould it not be as much to ſay, *Thou ſhalt not go out thence till thou haſt paid the laſt mite*, (Mat. 5. 25.) was he ever to remain there? I cannot conceive how Paul could have truly ſaid of him whoſe work will conſume, that he ſhall be *ſaved ſo as by fire* (1 Cor. 3. 15.) in caſe he was doomed to hell, whence there is no redemption? ---6. Why have ye not proved, it is a popiſh dogma that indulgences are applicable to the dead, before you attacked them on that ſcore?—7. You might as well ſay, that the blood of Chriſt has diſpenſed with our repentance as penance; or thro' bodily mortifications may we not be renewed in the ſpirit? ---8. Whether St. James's anointing the ſick was intended for their miraculous cure, which always followed thereupon, is immaterial as to its being a ſacrament, whilſt he and Rome agree as to its virtue of cancelling ſin.---9. Why have you not proved Matrimony not to be a ſacrament, from its not being neceſſary to all? and that peopling the earth requires it ſhould be indiſpenſible; though its inhabitants, from their numbers, are already famiſhing?---10. To rectify your notion of orders, I refer you to (5. 2. 83.) and likewiſe to (5. 2. 3.) for that of confirmation, which the proteſtant church, you ſay, makes uſe of, that children, when

when grown up, may ratify and *confirm* the baptism they had received when young, tho' Stillingfleet thinks otherwise (see 5. 2. 24.)

V.—11. If without raising the jealousy of my friend, I may buss his picture, why not a crucifix, for instance, or an *ecce homo?* Why have you not shewn image worship in a relative way, if forbidden Jews to be so to Christians? the imposture of Christ's presence in the host, before you inveighed against its adoration? and that it is the same thing to offer the mass to, and in honour of, the saints? May a diamond garland not be made in honour of a lady's birth-day, without its being given to her? —12. May God not admit of the prayers, as well of the dead as living, for others, not from any necessity, but the affection he bears them? May a minister of state not be so fond of his lady, as to grant her petition on behalf of the distressed, and yet not reprehend her for meddling with politics? Or might not this be the case with Christ and his mother at the wedding at Cana (John 2. 4)? Are there no allowances to be made for the exaggeration of panegyrists, especially when a declaration is made, that all terminates in *ora pro nobis*, and that all demands are thro' Christ? Does the incessant utterance of *holy, holy* (Rev. 4. 8) not apologize for so many repetitions of the *Ave Maria*, and the name of Jesus?—13. Is the edification, arising from a worship in a known tongue, so necessary, as to be indispensible? Is what St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 11. 4, &c.) to be for ever a rule? and, if not, why should the edification he speaks of (1 Cor. 14.) be so?—14. Have quakers not the same right to exclaim against the ceremonies of the established church, as this against the gorgeous pageantry of Rome?—15. Though we may have no injunctions of scripture concerning celibacy, and abstinence from certain

meats;

meats; yet, for good reaſons, may they not be made a duty, the ſame as a late act makes it ſo, to be married by the pariſh miniſter, whereof there is no ſcripture command? or may the one not be as much conducive to godlineſs as the other?—16. Are works of ſupererogation ſo called from their redundancy being treaſured up for the benefit of others? or rather from their being over and above the command? If ſolitude and retirement are a means of promoting the knowledge and love of natural, why not of ſupernatural objects?

VI. Theſe are the chief ſcruples I entertain concerning your laboured *Antidote againſt Popery*, to which I would chearfully ſubſcribe, ſhould I be lucky enough to ſee their groundleſſneſs; but, until then, I hope to be excuſed for invariably adhering to my profeſſion of,

A real Seeker.

FINIS.

THE

REAL SEEKER.

PART III.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE ungenerous manner my diſmiſſion from the Public Ledger has been obtained (See the italics, page 84.) is the cauſe of my having changed ſignatures, and ſeemingly inclining more to proteſtancy, in hopes, that, upon occaſion of an attempt of bringing about a general comprehenſion of its votaries, I might draw papiſts into the diſpute, and, as poſſibly indued with more benevolence and leſs aſperity, acquire through them that information, which thoſe ill-naturedly refuſed. I took every opportunity of compaſſing my ends, by expoſing their tenets and advocates in a contemptuous light, but could never make them ſpeak: whether they are to be characteriſed for this as children of darkneſs, or evangelical prudence, by turning the left cheek, when ſtruck on the right, let others ſay: however that be, I am as much to *ſeek* as ever; wherefore it is, that, with the view expreſſed in the preface, (vi. v.) I publiſh the following ſheets, which, conſidering the diſcouragements I have met with, are like to be my dernier effort. Should this be the caſe, and I take on with papiſts, let the world judge, if the inſincerity of proteſtants be not to blame, and if I have not room to think, that, far from being convinced of the truth of their religious profeſſion, their

warm champions only make it a cloak to cover ſome worldly views, whereof, beſides many more to be ſeen in the courſe of this work, the following ſhort letters not having been anſwered, is a convincing proof: for I cannot otherwiſe account for this ſilence, than by attributing it to a diffidence of their cauſe. They ſeem to apprehend, it might appear, if brought to a public ſcrutiny, ſo ſuſpicious, as would evince their attachment thereto to be againſt conviction. Hence the diſlike the generality of them expreſs to polemicks, leſt, it ſeems, they ſhould be tempted to change ſides, notwithſtanding their only obſtacles thereto, the ſcoffs of their neighbours, and, the main ſpring of all, a decay in their trade and ſecular intereſt: for I cannot ſuppoſe, they reckon the mode of worſhip a matter of indifference; as otherwiſe, that revealed to Moſes, and that laid down by Chriſt, muſt have been idle; the worſhip of the very pagans, according to the beſt proteſtant divines, when treating of popiſh idolatry, having been, in ſubſtance, that of the true God, all which makes me imagine, the world is nearly at that paſs, where Chriſt foretold, ſcarce any faith, whether underſtood of the theological virtue, or of what the French call *bonne foy*, is to be found upon earth, and that, in ſpite of people's ſpecious profeſſions of virtue and candour, *hobbiſm* is the only practical reigning principle of the age. The ſhort letters are theſe.

To

To Mr. J—— R—v—gt—n, September 3, 1767.

SIR,

HAVING had the *Addreſs to Britiſh Romaniſts, by a Layman of the Church of England*, given me, as per advertiſement, gratis in your ſhop, I was reſolved not to be behindhand with its author, in point of generoſity; wherefore it is that I beg you would give him the incloſed pages, and, if poſſible, engage him to favour me, thro' the channel of the Public Ledger, with proper ſolutions to the querles of the 19th letter, (See 141. I.) relative to his production, without which it can't be expected to make his intended impreſſion upon a

Real Seeker.

To Mr. W—ll—ms, September 11, 1767.

SIR,

THIS is to beg the favour you would deliver the incloſed to Mr. P—e, in hopes that he may condeſcend to take the advices therein given, (See 146. IX.) or expreſs his reaſons in the Ledger for rejecting them, the only method I ſee of evincing his ingenuouſneſs, and anſwering to his conſcience the many reflections caſt by his means on the Proteſtant cauſe. From your having expoſed his *Alarum* to ſale in your ſhop, (See 151. I.) I preſume your impartiality to be ſuch, as to prompt you to a compliance with this requeſt of

B—Z—B.

To Mr. P—dd—n, September 30, 1767.

SIR,

THIS is to beg the favour you would engage the author of *England's bloody Tribunal*, advertized for you the 6th of laſt June, (See 161. I.) to give a ſatisfactory ſolution to the incloſed queries, in the Ledger, which may be a means of making a proſelite to his way of thinking, of a

Real Seeker.

To the Printer of the Ledger, October 6, 1767.

SIR,

A Preacher at the eaſt end of the town, in order to induce his ſcrupulouſly timid congregation to a frequent communion, advanced laſt Sunday, that he did not ſee why as much preparation ſhould not be required for going to church, as receiving the ſacrament of the Lord's Supper, or in other words, for appearing in the preſence of the father, as obeying the command of the ſon. Now, Mr. Printer, I want to know from you, or correſpondents, if this doctrine be ſcriptural.

F. J. R.

This letter appearing in the Ledger, the following anſwer was ſent, but, like the reſt, though received, was overlooked.

To

To the Printer of the Ledger, October 8, 1767.

SIR,

YOUR correſpondent F. J. R, of laſt Tueſday, need not be ſcandalized at the doctrine in queſtion: if there is not ſuch ado about waſhing of feet on Paſſion Thurſday, or making an offering on Twelfth-day, in memory of what Chriſt and the wiſe men have done, I can't ſee why there ſhould, in taking a little bread and wine, in remembrance of what Chriſt did on the eve of his paſſion.

Your's, a

Real Seeker.

Theſe examples of inſincerity may ſuffice at preſent, many more may be ſeen in the ſequel of this pacific ſcheme.

LETTER XXIII.

To the Printer of the Gazetteer, *September* 30, 1767.

I. EVERY kingdom divided againſt itſelf will be brought to deſolation, is ſo notorious a truth, as to render the enumeration of examples in its confirmation altogether needleſs: ſuffice it then to my preſent purpoſe of paving the way to peace amongſt all Proteſtants, to evince the ſenſe of mankind herein, from the great dread people ſtood in, and deep concern they ever expreſſed of inteſtine broils: ſo great was at all times reckoned their miſchievous tendency.

Senſible of what they are thus big with, how bitterly has Luther deplored the fatal diviſions ariſing amongſt the members of the infant reform? Calvin, in his letter to the Lord Protector, expreſſed himſelf in the ſame lamentable ſtrain, upon the firſt appearance of our Engliſh liturgy. But no one, that I know, has ſo pathetically expatiated thereupon, by laying down at the ſame time, the moſt effectual remedy to prevent the wounds, and heal thoſe already made hereby, as Biſhop Ridley, in a letter to Biſhop Hooper, which is as followeth:

II. "To my dear brother, and reverend fellow elder in Chriſt, John Hooper, grace and peace. My dearly beloved brother, and fellow elder, whom I reverence in the Lord, pardon me, I beſeech thee, that hitherto ſince your captivity and mine, I have not ſaluted you by my letters; whereas

whereas I do indeed confeſs, I have received from you (ſuch was your gentleneſs) two letters, at ſundry times: but yet at ſuch time as I could not be ſuffered to write unto you again, or if I might, yet was I in doubt how my letters might ſafely come into your hands. But now, my dear brother, foraſmuch as I underſtand by your works, which I have but ſuperficially ſeen, that we thoroughly agree, and wholly conſent together in thoſe things, which are the grounds and ſubſtantial points of our religion, againſt the which, the world ſo furiouſly rageth in theſe our days, however in time paſt, in certain bye matters and circumſtances of religion, your wiſdom and my ſimplicity, I grant, have a little jarred, each of us following the abundance of his own ſenſe and judgment: now, I ſay, be you aſſured, that even with my whole heart, God is my witneſs, in the bowels of Chriſt I love you in the truth, and for the truth's ſake, which abideth in us, and as I am perſuaded, ſhall by the grace of God abide in us for evermore.

III. And becauſe the world (as I perceive brother) ceaſeth not to play his pageant, and buſily conſpireth againſt Chriſt our ſaviour, with all poſſible force and power, exalting things againſt the knowledge of God: let us join hands together in Chriſt, and if we cannot overthrow, yet, to our power, and as much as in us lieth, let us ſhake thoſe high altitudes, not with carnal, but with ſpiritual weapons; and withal brother, let us prepare ourſelves to the day of our diſſolution, by the which, after the ſhort time of this bodily affliction, by the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, we ſhall triumph together with him in glory.

I pray you, brother, ſalute in my name your reverend fellow priſoner, and venerable father,

D. C.

D. C. by whom, ſince the firſt day that I heard of his moſt godly and fatherly conſtancy in confeſſing the truth of the goſpel, I have received great conſolation in the Lord; for the integrity and uprightneſs of that man, his gravity and innocency, all England, I think, has known long ago. Bleſſed be God therefore, which in ſuch abundance of iniquity, and decay of all godlineſs, hath given unto us, in his reverend old age, ſuch a witneſs for the truth of the goſpel: miſerable and hard-hearted is he, whom the godlineſs and conſtant confeſſion of ſo worthy, ſo grave, and ſo innocent a man, will not move, to acknowledge and confeſs the truth of God.

IV. I do not now, brother require you to write any thing to me again; for I ſtand much in fear, leſt your letters ſhould be intercepted before they can come to my hands; nevertheleſs know you, that it ſhall be to me great joy, to hear your conſtancy and fortitude in the Lord's quarrel; and albeit I have not hitherto written unto you, yet have I twice (as I could) ſent unto you my mind, touching the matters, which in your letter you required to know. Neither can I yet, brother, be otherwiſe perſuaded: I ſee, methinks, ſo many perils, whereby I am earneſtly moved to counſel you not to haſten the publiſhing your works, eſpecially under the title of your own name, for I fear greatly, leſt by this occaſion, both your mouth ſhould be ſtopped hereafter, and all things taken away from the reſt of the priſoners, whereby otherwiſe, if it ſo pleaſe God, they may be able to do good to many. Farewel in the Lord, my moſt dear brother, and if there be any more in priſon with you for Chriſt's cauſe, I beſeech you, as you may, ſalute them in my name, to whoſe prayers I do moſt humbly and heartily commend

mend myſelf and my fellow priſoners and captives in the Lord, and yet once again, and for ever in Chriſt, my moſt dear brother farewell.

N. Ridley."

V. This letter, Mr. Printer, I have given at full length, both to give a notion of proteſtant ſufferings under Queen Mary, and eſpecially that it might ſerve as a pattern of moderation to ſome of your correſpondents, who have lately thrown out ſo many hints in diſfavour of methodiſts, and other diſſenting teachers, as if they merited to be involved in the ſame diſgrace with papiſts; whereas it is well known, they are as genuine children, and, under the act of toleration, as deſervedly countenanced as any branch of the reformation, their difference withal conſiſting only in modes and formalities at moſt; not ſubſtantials of religion. A minute account of ſome evils attending theſe domeſtic feuds, inflamed by ſuch incendiaries, I reſerve for another letter, I purpoſe ſending you, provided you favour me with the inſertion of this, which would much oblige a conſtant reader.

Pacificus.

LETTER XXIV.

To the Printer of the Gazetteer, *October* 12, 1767.

I. THAT the conformiſts, and non-conformiſts agree, as to ſubſtantials of religion, is plainly apparent from hence: they have all but one rule of faith and life, one ſtandard of religious worſhip

ſhip and practice, which is one and the ſame Engliſh bible; why then ſhould they not all be of one heart and one ſoul? they all believe that there is but one God, in oppoſition to politheiſm; they believe that this God is to be worſhipped in ſpirit and in truth, in contradiction to idolatry, without abſurdly changing the glory of the incorruptible God, into the ſimilitude of a corruptible man, or worſhipping our maker in the form of bread. They all believe in the father, ſon, and holy ghoſt, in whoſe names they were baptiſed: they are all taught to hope for everlaſting happineſs of God, through the merits of our only redeemer, mediator, and advocate, Jeſus Chriſt, the righteous, who is the author of eternal ſalvation to all thoſe that obey him. They are all aſſured, by many infallible proofs, that he is gone to heaven, to prepare a place for all his true diſciples and followers, and that the heavens muſt contain him till the reſtitution of all things; and that therefore he is not in any tabernacles or boxes here below. They all know aſſuredly, that in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted of him; and that the church of God is not now limitted or confined to the Jewiſh, or any other nation, or ſect, but is truly catholic and univerſal. They all believe the two future ſtates of heaven and hell, for the juſt, and for the unjuſt; and neither do their books or they allow of any other ſtate or kind of men; nor do any of them believe one word concerning the profitableneſs of praying or ſinging for a departed ſoul.

II. Since then they are unanimous in theſe and many others, the moſt important truths, how can they fall out about ceremonies? about poſtures and geſtures? about the hats and the knee? about dignifying and diſtinguiſhing titles? about garbs and

and garments? about modes and fashions? things, which are many removes from the essence of religion, nay which are shadows and mere nothings when compared to the substantial matters wherein they are agreed: nay, I am bold to say, they are all agreed in these inferior matters of indifference, without knowing it: for instance, they are agreed, that kneeling at the sacrament is no part of our saviour's institution; that kneeling at the most solemn prayer that can be, is a fitting posture; that kneeling to the sacrament, in imitation, or compliance with the popish worship of the host, is absolutely unlawful; that it is a matter of indifference what the place of worship be, which people resort to, whether St. Paul's church, the Foundery, Tottenham-court-road, or the Lock, provided God be but worshipped in spirit and truth: and yet they squabble, and will not hear one another out, nor understand one another's meanings, and scuffle in the dark, when they are all friends, and all of a side: in short, all the difference betwixt English protestants, is occasioned by little mistakes and misapprehensions about very little matters; and still they are so much of one mind, even as to these matters of indifference, that if Bishop Ridley and conformists thought the ceremonies popish, they would immediately turn non-conformists; and if Bishop Hooper and non-conformists did not apprehend them to be popish, they would never have scrupled them: so that they both of them plainly mean the same thing.

III. The nicety of the difference betwixt them lay in this, whether ceremonies, indifferent in themselves, but afterwards abused, might be purged and freed from such abuses, so as to become indiffrent and fit to be used again. Cranmer and Ridley urged, that the word *ballad* was once an innocent and inoffensive word, signifying no more than

than a ſong does now; but has been abuſed and applied to the meaneſt and moſt raſcally ſort of poetry; and yet that they could not ſee why ſome men, deſirous to ſpeak as their forefathers did, who called the book of canticles, the ballad of ballads, as reverently, as we call it now the ſong of ſongs, may not call it ſo again, eſpecially if a law were made that ordered it ſo, and declared that the ſelf ſame was meant by this title, as if the diſſenter had the wording of it himſelf to his own mind, and had called it the hymn of hymns. On the other hand, Hooper's opinion in this ſuppoſed caſe was, that, though our forefathers had uſed the word very religiouſly and reverently, yet it had ſince been ſo corrupted and abuſed, and had contracted ſo profane a ſignification, as no law could wholly deface, nor could ſo unoffenſively reſtore it, to be uſed in religious matters any more, but that ſober men would always have a prejudice againſt it. Thus he looked upon the reformed ceremonies as ſtill retaining a popiſh twang: but though the law for their eſtabliſhment could never remove his prejudices, yet in its conſideration, and that of doing ſervice in the church of God, he complied withal, what, if left to his own choice, he had forborn, an example worthy of all proteſtants imitation, to the end of time.

IV. This is the ſubſtance of ſome obſervations I find made upon Ridley's letter, relative to theſe bickerings, where, though I am ſurpriſed Hooper has not recollected the ignorance and weakneſs, St. Paul charges ſuch as ſcrupled to eat of meats offered to idols with. (1 Cor. viii.) Yet I am equally ſo, that Ridley and brethren could have boggled at condeſcending with a foible, he could not get the better of, ſo far as to maintain, it was not in King Edward the ſixth's power to diſpenſe with.

Hooper,

Hooper, in the rigour of a law, which had been made by the univerſal conſent of the great council of the nation, when St. Paul's charity was ſuch as to ſay: *Wherefore, if meat make my brother offend, I will eat no fleſh, while the world ſtandeth, leſt I make my brother to offend.* What would it have then been, had the queſtion been, not if he might eat it himſelf; but if his brother ſhould be made to eat it? what our modern zealots ſeem to drive at to the mortification of all well-wiſhers to proteſtancy, and inexpreſſible joy of its foes, who make a handle thereof to decry itſelf and votaries, which will be the ſubject of another letter from

Pacificus.

To the Printer of the Gazetteer, October 24, 1767.

I. HOWEVER laudable the views of your correſpondent Pacificus may be (concerning which I will, for the preſent, ſtart no ſcruples); he certainly builds his reaſon upon a falſe foundation, when he aſſerts, "that the Conformiſts and Non-conformiſts have all but one rule of faith and life, one ſtandard of worſhip and practice, which is one and the ſame Engliſh bible." The Engliſh bible, indeed, may be the rule of faith, and the ſtandard of worſhip to the Proteſtant Non-conformiſts, for aught I know to the contrary; if they have any other *eſtabliſhed* rule or ſtand-

ſtandard, I am unacquainted with it, and can determine nothing about it. But that the Engliſh bible is either a rule of faith, or a ſtandard of worſhip to the Conformiſts, is certainly a groſs miſtake. The Conformiſts rule of faith, is chiefly contained, not in the bible, but in certain long creeds, conſiſting of various propoſitions, which are not to be found in the bible-rule of faith. In like manner, the Conformiſts ſtandard of worſhip is ſo far from being a bible-ſtandard, that it conſiſts in rubrics, offices, invocations, habits, geſtures, and ſigns, which are not only not commanded, but not even mentioned or hinted at in the bible. And when the Conformiſt is interrogated, whence he has theſe things? he does not ſay he has them from the bible, but appeals for their *orthodoxy* to certain traditionary forms, derived, as he tells you, from the primitive church, but which, however, every one knows, he received more immediately from the church of Rome. If you farther aſk the Conformiſt, why, profeſſing himſelf a Proteſtant, and not finding theſe things in the bible, he continues to practice them? he anſwers, becauſe they are eſtabliſhed, and bound upon him by his civil and eccleſiaſtical ſuperiors; a circumſtance, which, while it continues, muſt for ever keep him at the wideſt diſtance from the ſincere and conſcientious Non-conformiſt, who is firmly perſuaded, that while the Conformiſt ſubmits to a rule of faith, and a ſtandard of worſhip preſcribed by his civil and eccleſiaſtical ſuperiors, which are different from the rule and ſtandard of the bible, he makes thoſe ſuperiors his maſters in religion, and not Chriſt; a ſort of ſubjection to which the Non-conformiſt cannot yield, as he is perſuaded ſuch ſubjection receives no authority, nor the leaſt countenance from the bible. I do not ſay that

the

the Engliſh bible is ſimply and compleatly a rule of faith, or ſtandard of worſhip, or even of religious diſcipline and government, to all Proteſtant Non-conformiſts, ſo called. There may be deviations and uſurpations among ſome of them, as well as among the Conformiſts. But this I ſay, that till the bible becomes in reality the only rule of faith, and the only ſtandard of worſhip to BOTH, it is in vain to think of reconciling them, notwithſtanding any goſpel principles of religion in which they may agree. And I ſhould not think it a leſs hopeful project (in the way that Pacificus goes to work) to reconcile the Conformiſts and Roman Catholics; for aſſuredly they have many common doctrines and practices, rules and ſtandards, which being ſtated after the manner of Pacificus, might give the hint to repreſent the points in difference between them, to be too few and inconſiderable to juſtify their ſeparating the one from the other. I hope Pacificus hath no ſuch view. To me, I own, he is yet in obſcurity; his next letter may give us more light. All I propoſed by this addreſs, is a friendly admonition to rectify his foundations, which at preſent ſtand upon a quick ſand. If he takes the hint, as it is meant, in good part, he ſhall hear again from

VIGILIUS.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

To the Printer of the Gazetteer, October 24, 1767.

I. NOR were the holy confeſſors the only of the then brethren who were ſtrenuous in promoting the Proteſtant union in religious ſentiments; Sandys, Jewel, Horn, Grindall, &c. nay Cox himſelf, Biſhop of Ely, however zealouſly tumultuous when at Frankfort, whither he had fled from Queen Mary's rage, did all of them labour in this point. Upon the acceſſion of Queen Elizabeth, they ſued to her, as one man, for the repeal of ſuch points of the liturgy as had given offence to their weak non-conforming brethren: but the Queen was inexorable. All this appears by a heap of their letters, written to Bullinger, at Zurick, which being the remains of thoſe great men, and ſo noble a monument of the church of England's moderation, is well worth the going thither to ſee it. I ſhall not take upon me to account for the Queen's ſtiffneſs, or little complaiſance of the Non-conformiſts to her Majeſty's will herein; nor does it matter whether a political or ſpiritual motive, zeal, conceit, or a griping after the good things of this life, whereof God alone can with certainty judge, lay at the bottom; as the conſequence would be equally dreadful, whatever it might have been.

II. Theſe conſequences are chiefly what I would here point out, and offer to the conſideration of your anti-methodiſtical correſpondents, Mr. Printer,

ter, that they may be the better judges of their own indiſcretion. It is but too well known that, abſtracting from the pernicious influence of religious diſputes (unleſs indeed ſet on foot, not as is uſually the caſe in a ſpirit of malevolence and contention, but a pacific way of information) upon that peace and harmony which conſtitute the neceſſary baſis of all ſocial happineſs, they are ever attended with more virulence betwixt brethren than ſtrangers. Of this the ſcriptures furniſh two remarkable examples: the one in Jeroboam's erecting altar againſt altar, by aſſigning Dan and Bethel as worſhipping places in Iſrael: the other, from Manaſſeh's doing as much under Jaddus on mount Garizim, from which time the choſen people of God, ſplit in two, became moſt inveterate foes, to the great ſcandal of the ſurrounding Gentiles, who, very likely, might be glad of ſo plauſible an occaſion, not only of excuſing themſelves from becoming proſelytes to Judaiſm, and continuing their own idolatrous rites, on pretence of not being able to determine which ſide of the irreconcileably jangling parties to embrace; but even of attempting the utter overthrow of the Synagogue, the accompliſhment of which may poſſibly be thus accounted for, without recourſe to the prophetic menaces of Heaven. Another ſignal inſtance we have hereof, without going beyond our own limits. When have the ſtruggles of any two civilized nations been ever attended with ſuch an unparallelled ſcene as was exhibited here about the middle of the laſt century, only for religious factions ſprung up amongſt ourſelves?

III. But the powerful diverſions thoſe commotions make in favour of the watchful, and ever

prowling common foe, is what I would have particularly obſerved. As every true patriot muſt ſhudder to find the ſpirit of duelling ſo to prevail, as that fellow-ſubjects daily imbrew their hands in that blood which ſhould be reſerved for repelling the invading foe; ſo muſt it be a lamentably affecting ſcene to any well-wiſher of proteſtancy, to ſee its choice members at daggers drawing for very trifles; when, as our holy biſhop expreſſes it, "The world ſo furiouſly rageth againſt the grounds and ſubſtantial points of their own religion, and ceaſeth not to play his pageant," &c. Is it a time for them, as his commentator expreſſes it, to trouble their heads with trivial matters, when the ſum and ſubſtance of their religion is in danger, and lies at ſtake? Or do they not daily ſee papiſts laying the axe to the root of the tree? Do they not hear them ſay, Proteſtants have as many bibles as heads? That without Rome's blind guide to interpret the ſame, they may be as well without, and frame their religion without it? Do they not endeavour to wreſt it out of their hands on this pretence, and becauſe they will not receive their forged traditions with the ſame reverence?

IV. Their preſent buſineſs, therefore, is to lay a dead hold on their bibles, and to maintain the grounds and ſubſtantial points of their religion; to ſuffer circumſtances and bye-matters to take their chance; nay, they ought to be in readineſs to compound for their bibles, and rather, with due deference to the wiſdom of thoſe at the helm, to throw all ceremonies over-board with their own hands, the ſlovenly Papiſts having once ſpit in them, than to endanger the Proteſtant religion, which is infinitely more valuable. Do they not ſee Seculars, Regulars, Jeſuits, Dominicans, Franciſcans,

ciſcans, and the reſt of that colluvies and gallimawfray of ſects, the church of Rome is made up of, lay aſide all the differences of their ſeveral factions and confederate againſt God's true religion? And though they are not agreed in many other things, yet they are ſo, for extirpating the peſtilent, as they opprobriouſly term it, northern hereſy. Should they not then unite in their utmoſt endeavours to ſupport that true faith, erroneouſly called hereſy? Should they not be ready to give one another the right hand of fellowſhip, and to join hands together in Chriſt, and for him, when they ſee how unanimous Papiſts are in banding againſt them? This ſhould be the common concern of all; every man has a ſoul to be ſaved, an equal ſhare in the bible, an equal intereſt in their religion; their ſtake is the ſame, and therefore all ought to be as one man in the maintenance and ſupport thereof; every individual, according to his power and capacity, ought to be as zealous for it, as if he was its only ſupport; and ſhould ſay with Peter, "Though all men ſhould forſake thee, yet will not I."

V. By this means, under God, they would preſerve their religion, and tranſmit it to their poſterity at a far cheaper rate than Ridley, Hooper, and the reſt of the bleſſed martyrs, conveyed it down to them; thus they would diſengage themſelves from all needleſs diſputes about meats and drink, and ſuch like things, in which the kingdom of God does not conſiſt, and from thoſe ſkirmiſhings which detain them too much upon the frontiers of religion, without cultivating and reaping the fruits of that holy land in that meaſure they ought to have done. Thus, by engaging in the Lord's quarrel, their private groundleſs animoſities would ceaſe: In a word, by this means they would be

freed from thoſe diviſions that hinder them from exerciſing the power of godlineſs, both in reforming their own lives, and putting a ſtop to that deluge of impiety which has been let into the nation, in order to make way for popery; and they would have an opportunity to employ their united endeavours in promoting the goſpel, to the high honour of God, the edification of the church, and ſalvation of their own ſouls.

VI. I am ſenſible that Romiſh emiſſaries, conſcious of the vaſt advantage Proteſtant factions would be to their cauſe, have ever been, and are to this day, very active in fomenting them. In the beginning they declared againſt the eſtabliſhed church, by making believe her liturgy was but a bungling piece, botched up of the mere rags of Rome. When this became thread-bare, ſo as to gain but little or no credit, they then exaggerated, under the odious name of perſecution, her ill treatment to the Non-conformiſts; but ſince by the toleration this pretence for widening the gap was taken away, they have changed ſides; and, as we find by ſome late publications, would paſs the Conformiſts, if Methodiſts and other late ſectaries may be ſo called, for as turbulent and as pernicious, on principle, to government, as the very Papiſts, thus endeavouring at all events to revive the old jealouſies, that they may themſelves fiſh in troubled water.

VII. But how Proteſtants could be blind to their drift, and thus bubbled by theſe firebrands, is a matter of amazement to me. They favour Conformiſts and Non-conformiſts by turns, as they find it turn to account; but who does not ſee, that they bear an equally implacable hatred to both? Were Ridley and Hooper, the repreſentatives of both, not treated alike in Queen Mary's reign?

reign? Were they both of them not ſo long and cruelly tormented in the flames, that they were forced to mingle with their prayers to God theſe doleful outcries to the people; the firſt, "For God's love let me have more fire;" the ſecond, "For God's ſake let the fire come unto me?" No, no; they made no difference; it is then a ſhame that Proteſtants ſhould; but rather bleſs God for the concurring teſtimony they both have given to their religion, and exceedingly prize the uſe of their bibles, which was the purchaſe of theirs, and other martyrs blood, according to what Latimer ſaid, when he and Ridley were both at the ſtake, "Be of good comfort, Maſter Ridley, and play the man; we ſhall this day light a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I truſt ſhall never be put out." They ſhould hold cloſely together, that they may ſhield this light from the open mouths and impetuous blaſts of thoſe who ſeek to extinguiſh it, and to leave them and poſterity to the old Ægyptian darkneſs.

PACIFICUS.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Printer of the Gazetteer, November 7, 1767.

I. THE diverſion made in favour of Papiſts, is far from being the greateſt evil conſequent upon Proteſtant broils; beſides it being certain from reaſon and experience, that polemical, like military abilities, improve and ripen by practice;

tice; thoſe of our Proteſtant champions, however exerted againſt one another, are never ſo exhauſted, but that they, upon all emergencies, will be an over-match for their Popiſh antagoniſts. The knowledge of the ſacred languages, acquired in our home univerſities, without which controverſy can ſcarcely be managed with any tolerable ſucceſs, and a thorough acquaintance with the propriety and phraſeology of our own idiom, ſo neceſſary a perſuaſive for the multitude both in and out of the pulpit, are advantages no foreign education can pretend to equal. Hence it is that Popiſh prieſts, ſenſible of the odds being herein againſt them, ever ſculk and ſeek for proſelytes amonſt the blind vulgar, rather, perhaps, for picking their pockets, than gaining their ſouls to Heaven, by exaggerating the merit of blind obedience to mother Church, a principle of ſuch pernicious tendency, as to obtrude the higheſt abſurdity upon their belief, the profligateneſs of ſome prime reformers, and the unwarrantableneſs of ſome violent meaſures they and ſucceſſors purſued, which arguments, though mere b—l—g—e, and reflecting as little upon the reformation as the looſe morals of a lawyer upon the good cauſe he patroniſes, or the teſtimony of the father of lies upon the truth of Chriſt's meſſiahſhip (Luke iv. 41.) yet have often the deſired effect upon weak minds, incapable of being wrought upon by any other reaſon than mere appearances; or ſhould they chance to try the merits of their cauſe upon its own intrinſic worth, or the evidence of ſcripture, it is great odds if the moſt rational reply be not treated as a cavil, and he that makes it told, *believe or be d——d*; but this empirical kind of argument is worthy of contempt, compared to that they are furniſhed with from Proteſtant broils,

which

which I am now entering upon. Although of the extrinſic kind, with them it is of the greateſt weight, and, to my thought, very far from being deſpicable: Who would, ſay they, continue in, or attempt to reconcile others to a religion, where no two agree? This alone ſhould be an undoubted ſymptom of its being erroneous: God is the author as well of peace as of truth; where therefore that is not to be met with, who could expect that either he or this could be found? Now, that there is no peace here, is plain; beſides many inſtances of their inveteracy taken from the public prints already hinted at, do the eſtabliſhed clergy not draw a parallel betwixt the enthuſiaſm of Papiſts and Methodiſts? Do theſe in return, not inveigh, even from the pulpit, againſt thoſe? and treat them as drones for pampering themſelves with the delicious fruits of fat livings, without taking little or no pains, whilſt themſelves are in a ſtarved plight, though inceſſantly tugging hard at the labouring oar?

II. Should you tell them, the difference is but trifling, you will ſoon hear them aſk, what you mean by a trifle? If you ſay, it is what has no foundation in ſcripture, you will be told, it does not ſignify whether it has or not, if the parties be not leſs at variance, the only thing that makes the unfavourable impreſſion upon the ſtanders by. Whether unleavened bread, for inſtance, or withholding the cup, be ſcriptural or not, is no matter; Greeks and Proteſtants condemning Rome, which holds them for indifferent, on this ſcore, the breach is equally wide: Why then ſhould it not be ſo with Proteſtant factions, if one ſhould condemn what another reckons indifferent? and that condemnation is in the caſe, ſeems undoubted from former revolutions, and the ill blood boil-

ing in their veins, and occaſionally breaking out with much virulency, which cannot be preſumed to be ſo, for what both ſides hold as trifles.

III. This is not all; to render, if poſſible, the breach irreparable, Papiſts urge further, that they do not ſee why Non-conformiſts need agree, that what is in debate betwixt them and Conformiſts, is but trifling; the conformity of theſe with Rome, in even ſome of the moſt ſubſtantial, and thought peculiar points of her creed, is their common charge; and Mr. Printer, your correſpondent Vigilius, of the 24th inſtant, ſeems of the ſame mind; not only their ceremonials, ſuch as rubrics, offices, invocations, habits, geſtures, and ſigns, whereof he owns the Non-conformiſts may have, for aught he knows, a proportionable number, he reckons unſcriptural, but even many points of their long creeds; though this be in direct oppoſition to the formal avowal made of the contrary in their ſixth article of religion, in theſe words: "Holy ſcripture containeth all things neceſſary to ſalvation; ſo that whatſoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it ſhould be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requiſite or neceſſary to ſalvation."

IV. Now, Mr. Printer, the conſequence Papiſts draw from hence, is the following dreadful dilemma; either, therefore, ſay they, Non-conformiſts have a right to fall out with Conformiſts on this ſcore, or theſe were unjuſtifiable in their rupture with Rome; and, of courſe, a reconciliation is as difficult to be brought to bear on one ſide as the other. The juſtneſs of theſe conſequences depending upon the truth of ſaid allegations reſpecting ſubſtantials, the Papiſts and Vigilius are here called upon to ſupport thoſe ſubſtantial points,

which

which, if found unſcriptural, I ſhall rank with the ceremonials. This liberty, I preſume, Vigilius, in particular, will not take amiſs, as the wider the breach, the more deſirable the union, which ſhould be the object of the warmeſt vows of any well-wiſher, not to his own ſect alone, as is the caſe with Jews and Papiſts, but to mankind in general, even ſhould that of Conformiſts with Papiſts be the conſequence: and that he may depend a due regard will, in return, be ever paid to his informations and *friendly admoniſhments*, by

PACIFICUS.

Here, upon the approach of Wilkes and Liberty, all his poetical, papiſtical, and anti-papiſtical correſpondents having been diſcharged, thus I addreſſed myſelf:

To the Printer of the Gazetteer, November 29, 1767.

SIR,

I Am extremely ſorry, after having been kind enough to inſert four of my letters, you have withheld the fifth, where I juſt began to bring my ſcheme to ſome degree of maturity; it would be ſome alleviation of my mortification, were you to condeſcend to let me know, that it came to hand, and would be indulged a place in default of more intereſting ſubjects, whereof you muſt be owned beſt judge, both as to the credit of your very uſeful paper, and the public taſte.

The

The diſmiſſion of your correſpondents for and againſt popery, will, I preſume, not affect me, when I pledge my word for wholly confining my plan to the adjuſtment of Proteſtant diſſenſions, without once looking that way; or, ſhould I unadviſedly trip beyond theſe bounds, for readily yielding to eternal ſilence, and the forfeiture of that honour, which is the moſt valuable appendix of

PACIFICUS.

ANSWER.

Pacificus's *fifth letter was received, but is not admiſſible, being upon a religious topic. This made me apply, under the title of* Meanwell, *as followeth.*

To the Printer of the Public Ledger.

SIR,

I Beg the favour to know if you would indulge me a place in your very uſeful paper, for the proſecution of a plan of union I am endeavouring to project, between the different branches of Proteſtancy, whoſe bickerings have, from ſome late publications, been very conſpicuous, to the diſedification of well-wiſhers, and, I make no doubt, great joy of the foes to the common cauſe. Four of my letters have been already publiſhed in another paper; but the Printer gives me to underſtand, he has no room for religious ſubjects this ſeaſon of the year: As this may not be the caſe

caſe with you, your compliance will be gratefully acknowledged by your conſtant reader,

MEANWELL.

ANSWER.

We can come to no reſolution as to Meanwell, *until we are given to underſtand how many and how long each letter may be.*

To the Printer of the Public Ledger.

SIR,

IF I may judge of a plan, which is ſtill in embrio, it will be compriſed in twenty letters, of a length, one with the other, to take up about one column in your paper; but this, I fancy, ſhould make no difference, as you ſhall be always maſter to cut any letter ſhort at will, reſerving the reſidue for the ſubſequent one. If this meets with your approbation, there only remains to know, if you will begin with the 5th letter, or what I ſhould like much better, with the four mentioned in my laſt, as then the whole would be contained in your paper, without recourſe to any other,

MEANWELL.

ANSWER.

We accept of Meanwell's *correſpondence very readily, but cannot re-print the four letters already publiſhed in another paper; it will be an eaſy matter for him, however, to make a reference to the letters, or throw the ſentiments which they contain, into a new form, ſo as to make them originals to our readers. This laſt point I have complied with in the ſubſequent.*

To

LETTER XXVII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, February 4, 1768.

I. LIGHTING ſome time ſince upon a letter taken from the acts of Mr. Fox's martyrs, and written by Biſhop Ridley to Biſhop Hooper, when in confinement under Queen Mary for the glorious cauſe of the Reformation; I found myſelf, however unequal to the taſk, ſecretly impelled to the execution of a plan of Pacification amongſt Proteſtants, of which it contains a fair ſketch, by giving to underſtand that the whole difference betwixt the two parties then reigning of Conformiſts and Non-conformiſts, conſiſted in ſome bye-matters and circumſtances, not ſubſtantials of religion. What made me the readier embark in the cauſe was, that notwithſtanding the Toleration Act under King William, of immortal memory, I find ſo many ſarcaſtic hints thrown out in the public papers, ſometimes againſt the diſſenting teachers, and ſometimes againſt the miniſters of the eſtabliſhed church, as make it to be feared, the fire only lurks under the cinders, and may, upon a proper opportunity, burſt out into a no leſs waſting flame than that in the days of yore; an inconteſtable proof that no method ſo effectually reconciles different religious intereſts, as convincing the underſtanding by ſhewing which is right and which is wrong. We may as well expect the unclean kind of animals, for being pent up in Noah's ark, ſhould have been transformed into clean, as that by means of a mere toleration,

a cor-

a cordial reconciliation would ever be here brought about.

II. That the difference is not in fundamentals appears from hence; the ſcripture is adopted as a rule herein on both ſides, witneſs their being unanimous in rejecting all the unſcriptural points of Popery, Deiſm and Paganiſm, and that they jar only as to modes and ceremonies, which no ways appertain to the eſſentials of religion; inſomuch that though kneeling at the ſacrament, for inſtance, be, perhaps, a decent poſture, yet it muſt be owned but a matter of indifference, provided it be not done with a papiſtical view: for though it might have been, and is ſtill abuſed to ſuch an idolatrous purpoſe, this is no reaſon, why, like the meats offered to idols, ſpoken of by St. Paul (1 Cor viii.) it may not ſerve innocent and edifying ends: and hence it is that Hooper, for peace ſake, gave up the point, which Ridley had ceded to him rather than continue the breach.

III. The epiſcopal order in Queen Elizabeth's reign were all of this pacific diſpoſition. The moſt turbulent of them, in the two preceding, ſued as one man to her for the repeal of ſuch points of the public church ſervice as might have given offence to their ſcrupulouſly weak Non-conforming brethren; but Preſbytery was her abhorrence, which from the apprehenſion of the true or falſe maxim, *no Biſhop, no King*, rather increaſed in the three following reigns, to ſuch a degree, that the Puritans were forced to take ſhelter in the wilds of America from the penalties of Popiſh recuſancy, from which, though by the toleration act they be at preſent relieved, yet they are galled by another grievance, no better than a ſlow death, the duty of ſubſcribing againſt conſcience

the liturgy, and 39 articles, or ſtarve by hunger and nakedneſs, there being no other way than this to church preferment, nor to civil offices, than through the ſacramental teſt, which, though in appearance not ſo revolting as a Spaniſh inquiſition, equally foments the diviſion, to the mortification of every well-wiſher, and joy of the foes to the common cauſe.

IV. The fatal conſequences of religious diviſions, ever remarkable for being attended with more acrimony betwixt brethren than ſtrangers, we need not take the trouble to look for in the records of very diſtant times or nations: never in any war carried on betwixt the greateſt of ſavages have, perhaps, ſuch barbarity and virulence been diſplayed, as hiſtory relates of the maſſacres perpetrated by fellow-citizens in Paris and Ireland, which, for their enormity, ſhould therefore have a veil thrown over them, to conceal them, if poſſible, from our own eyes: wherefore it is that I leave them to be canvaſſed by ſuch as delight in ſcenes of horror, which are equally ſhocking to any fellow-feeling heart, be the juſtice on what ſide ſoever it may.

V. The advantage Rome's emiſſaries make hereof, is what I would have chiefly attended to, as I reckon it of too ſerious a nature to be ſlighted. We are ſenſible how inchanting the beauties of union and harmony muſt be in vulgar eyes. Their chief prey, incapable of judging of the intrinſic merit of a cauſe, they are not wanting in inhancing them beyond their juſt value, by contraſting them with the anarchical doings of a never to be adjuſted wrangling diſunion; and in this they often meet with but too much ſucceſs, by decoying the natural born ſubjects of our national church, we ourſelves are ſcrambling for, on pre-

tence

tence of a diſſenſion being the characteriſtic of error. This brings to my mind the fate of the bone, two dogs were fighting for, and run away with by a third; and that humorous print of the cow, the Dutchman was milking, whilſt the Engliſh and French were hauling her, one by the horns, the other by the tail; and this poſſibly may be as likely a cauſe of the growth of popery amongſt us, as any hitherto aſſigned.

VI. It would be in vain to ſay, the difference is about trifles, mere rites and formalities; for you would ſoon be told, what Conformiſts reckon trifles Non-conformiſts may think of importance; ſo that the breach may be equally as wide, as if both were agreed as to their conſequence. Papiſts ſay it is a matter of indifference what language we publicly addreſs ourſelves to the deity in. The church of England (Art. 24.) maintains it is a thing repugnant to the word of God to have public prayer in the church, in a tongue not underſtood by the people: yet the rupture is as great here, as did the one hold the Latin, as eſſential as the other does the vulgar. Moreover, I do not ſee what anſwer could be well made, ſhould it be aſked, why Conformiſts ſhould boggle at giving up trifles for peace ſake, when Non-conformiſts declare them irreconcileable to their conſcience: eſpecially by adding this to be the work, not of neceſſity or conviction of their erroneouſneſs, but of meer condeſcenſion or courteſy?

VII. I am aware of another reply made to this Popiſh objection, to wit, that it might have been made by Pagans and Jews, to the primitive Chriſtians, nay, and the apoſtles themſelves; whoſe religion, however, no papiſt can deny to have been undoubtedly true. But though I ſhould own

the

the retortion, from which I leave Rome's votaries to diſentangle themſelves, by ſhewing the difference, to be unanſwerably *ad hominem* againſt any profeſſed Chriſtian; yet, what figure would it make in the mouth of one of our miſſionaries, commiſſioned by the Society for propagating the Goſpel in the Eaſt and Weſt Indies againſt Infidels, who, after ſtarting ſo obvious an objection, would look upon diviſions as derogatory to primitive chriſtianity as modern proteſtantiſm or popery?

VIII. Thus far I have laid down the evil conſequences, I apprehend, attending our religious diſſenſions, my next endeavours will aim at their adjuſtment; for which ſalutary purpoſe, Mr. Printer, I beg the aſſiſtance of your peaceably inclined Non-conforming correſpondents, either by expoſing the inſufficiency of my pleas, in behalf of our eſtabliſhed church, or ſuggeſting ſuch cauſes of the unhappy breach, by pointing out ſuch exceptionable parts of our liturgy, or articles, as may eſcape my notice, and likewiſe that of our church divines, by aſſigning their exceptions to an unlimitted toleration, in caſe the ſcrupuloſity of their tender conſcienced brethren was found unſurmountable, which are the chief objects of theſe diſquiſitions, whereof the inſertion would much oblige

PACIFICUS.

For the Public Ledger, February 20, 1768.

I. THE caſe ſtated by your correſpondent *Pacificus*, in your Ledger of February the 4th, is well worthy the conſideration of all Proteſtants; and though his expreſſions in ſome inſtances are a little myſterious, yet common candor requires that we ſhould believe him a friend to what he calls the *glorious cauſe of the Reformation*, till the contrary more plainly appears. However, as he hath modeſtly called for aſſiſtance in purſuing his topic, I hope he will take in good part a few modeſt ſuggeſtions, that ſome things in his letter are not quite firm enough for a foundation, whatever it is that he intends to build upon them.

II. I would in the firſt place requeſt him to explain what innocent and edifying ends either are, or may be anſwered by kneeling at the communion, when no adoration is intended; and why, if this innocence and edification are obvious, the church of England ſhould have been at ſo much pains to explain the ceremony, and to diſavow the papiſtical purpoſes to which it may be, and perhaps by ſome of the meaner claſs of Proteſtants, is actually perverted.

In the next place, I ſhould be glad to ſee the authorities which give him leave to affirm, that the epiſcopal order in Queen Elizabeth's time, were *all* of a pacific diſpoſition, and particularly that Archbiſhop Whitgift was ſo.

III. Pacificus conſiders the maſſacres of Paris and Ireland, (to which he might have added the maſſacres of the inquiſition of Dragoonades, &c.) as the effects of religious diviſion among brethren; whereas they were the genuine fruits of an abſurd

and impoſſible attempt, to accompliſh the beauties of that harmony and union, which he repreſents as ſo enchanting in the eyes of the vulgar; an attempt to make all the world of the ſame ſentiments in religion, which can never be brought about, without delivering up the conſciences and underſtandings of the whole chriſtian body, to the direction of a few tyrants, who of all others are the leaſt qualified for ſuch a truſt.

IV. There have been a greater number of excellent men, of the eſtabliſhed church of England, who have ſhewn the futility of all pretences to unity in the church of Rome itſelf, and the horridly iniquitous conſequences of attempting to produce it among others by force. This has occaſioned the church of England to diſavow in particular inſtances, all ſuch attempts as are diſagreeable to the ſpirit of chriſtianity. But then unhappily, the church of England has only dropped the word *unity*, to adopt another of the ſame family, namely *uniformity*, of which ſhe ſeems to be equally enamoured, and which ſhe hath endeavoured to bring about by attempts of the ſame ſort, though not of equal malignity with thoſe in uſe in the church of Rome; and hence it is that the Toleration-Act of William the 3d, hath left thoſe diſcontents in the minds of Proteſtant Diſſenters, and brought forth ſo few of thoſe good fruits which ſome people expected from it. For the Diſſenters conſider it as only ſaying to them, "You ſhall not be fined, impriſoned, or hanged, for going to meetings, but while you diſſent from the church; your miniſters ſhall have no recompenſe for their labours from the public; nor ſhall a layman among you have any emolument from any public office of the civil kind, except he will receive the communion kneeling."

V. If

V. If there is any difference between *unity*, as underſtood in the church of Rome, and *uniformity*, as required by the church of England, it is that the former takes in belief, ſentiments and opinions; the latter only external compliance with forms. If *unity* in religion could be compaſſed, all Chriſtians would be of one mind, throughout the whole ſyſtem both of doctrine and diſcipline; but as this is impracticable, what does the church of England gain by inforcing *uniformity* in the ſtead of it? Even the honour of adding to her members as many hypocrites as there are conformiſts in externals, who aſſent not in their hearts to the forms which the law of uniformity obliges them to practice.

This law, or theſe laws, I call the *inforcing* uniformity; for who knows not that rewards and emoluments which cannot otherwiſe be had, but by conforming, put as great force upon many mens minds, as the halters of Tyburn, or the faggots of Smithfield?

V. There is another queſtion I would put to Pacificus, who thoſe Papiſts are, who ſay it is a matter of indifference in what language we publicly addreſs the Deity? I mean, in which of the Popiſh doctors hath he ever found any ſuch ſaying? And whether he would be underſtood, that performing the ſervice in the Latin tongue is a matter of ſuch indifference, that the church of England might give it up to the Papiſts for peace-ſake?

VII. In one word, the methods of procuring religious peace in any ſtate or kingdom, lie within a ſmall compaſs: it is but allowing free and equal liberty to every man who is a peaceable and dutiful ſubject to the civil government, and who entertains no principles inconſiſtent with or unfriend-

ly to the civil conſtitution of his country, to worſhip God in his own way, and to exclude no Proteſtant, well affected to the ſettlement of the crown, from any offices which his integrity, capacity, and education, enable him to diſcharge; and to lay no reſtraints upon any perſons in matters of religion, but ſuch as acknowledge themſelves ſubject to a foreign juriſdiction, and, like the Papiſts, avow the principles of intolerance, and who would, if they had an opportunity, deſtroy every perſon who does not believe their creed, or refuſes to worſhip their idols. It is not ſafe either for the head or members of a free government, to tolerate ſuch a ſect for a ſingle hour. If you would have religious peace, expel every thing from your community which has occaſioned the breach of it, among the principal of which are thoſe ordinances which make church-membership depend upon conditions of man's device, without the leaſt authority, either from Chriſt, or his Apoſtles. All other expedients are but little temporary ſhifts, contrived to cover the artifices and iniquity of one particular ſet of men, whoſe chief care is to make a gain of godlineſs, and to get the dominion over the flock of God, for the bleſſed purpoſe of ſhearing their fleeces for their own uſe.

I am, Sir, &c.

VERIDICUS.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, April 11, 1768.

I. AFTER having given you in my former a ſketch of the evil tendency of Proteſtant ſchiſms, it is hoped, Mr. Printer, I may be allowed to offer my mite towards their adjuſtment, a work which, if brought to bear with any tolerable ſucceſs, muſt be owned of ſingular ſervice, as nothing can be ſo deſirable in a ſocial life as concord. Some foreigners have endeavoured the point, by exhibiting a harmony betwixt the Proteſtant confeſſions of ſeveral different churches, which attempt could never anſwer, whilſt there remained one ſubſtantial article of diſagreement, which unfortunately was found to be plainly the caſe, and of courſe made it prove abortive: hence it is, that I labour to ſhew variable things, ſuch as ceremonies, unleſs forbidden in ſcripture, ſhould break no ſquares; nor even invariable, ſuch as articles of belief, if founded upon that unexceptionable ground, which I ſhall uſe my endeavours to ſhew to be the caſe with thoſe of the eſtabliſhed church, by expoſing the fallacy of what I find objected thereto, in both which points I have herſelf for my guide. "Things of indifference, ſays ſhe (art. 34.) or not contrary to the word of God, ſuch as ceremonies may vary according to the diverſity of countries, times, and mens manners;" whence ſhe concludes in the preface to the Common Prayer, that no one can reaſonably re-

ject them without betraying his own folly; and (art. 6) "Nothing is to be enjoined as an article of faith, or neceſſary for ſalvation, but what is read in ſcripture, or may be proved thereby."

II. As to ceremonies, ſince I entertained the firſt thoughts of my plan, it was a matter of amazement to me, how any ſociety, civil or religious, could in reaſon be refuſed a right to make ſuch rules, and enact ſuch laws, not repugnant to ſcripture, as might ſeem conducive to its permanency, well-being, or even decorum. As I never could have heard of any, but tolerably regular, without ſuch regulations the enumeration of examples in ſupport of my aſtoniſhment were ſuperfluous: if the eſtabliſhed church be therefore a ſociety, it ſurely ſhould enjoy the privilege.

III. And indeed, if St. Paul (1 Cor. xi. 4.) without any law or precedent from our ſcripture, has ordered that men ſhould be uncovered, when praying or prophecying; I ſee no reaſon why his ſucceſſors in the miniſtry might not think that a mitre, rochet, ſurplice or cap ſhould be uſed in ſome eccleſiaſtical functions: nor why George Fox could have been found fault with for ordering them to be covered, provided he could have aſſigned a more rational cauſe for having done ſo than affectation and ſingularity: for thoſe alledged by Paul do not ſeem ſo cogent as to make this indiſpenſible in all times and places; for who does not ſee, the covering one's head, which in his time might be diſhonourable, and a mark of ſubjection, may now be graceful, and an emblem of ſuperiority? Or, barring particular privileges, are princes not the only, who wear their hats at court?

IV. It

IV. It is true Paul's regulation is in ſcripture, not the others. But what then? I am ſenſible of the great advantage of ſcripture, for diſtinguiſhing genuine from legendary doctrines: but the queſtion is, if the apoſtles could have ordered ceremonials not to be met with in Chriſt's tranſactions, why ſocieties ſucceeding them might not have made thus free with theirs, by eſtabliſhing ſome, whereof they had made no mention? and why not as well as himſelf gives different directions in the fourteenth chapter, and elſewhere from thoſe he gives here? and that he perhaps had given neither, had he not been conſulted? Now, ſuppoſing the caſe had been put after his death, and that of his colleagues, can we imagine it could not have been reſolved?

V. But here it is replied, that the eſtabliſhed church is of human inſtitution, the work of Lords, Commons, and King; whereas Chriſt declared his kingdom was not of this world, (John xviii. 36.) and of courſe that no one of this world ſhould undertake the management of its concerns, or modeling of its rights; wherefore it is that we can only ſubmit to ſuch things in that church, as may be plainly traced from the expreſs words of ſcripture; faith and conſcience having no dependance upon man's laws and authority.

VI. But, leaving the original of ſecular and church authority to be canvaſſed by others, is the ceremonial part of Chriſt's religion to be reckoned ſo very ſacred, as that no human authority could interfere with its œconomy, when that of God himſelf in the old law was not ſo? has David not divided the Levites into claſſes? (1 Chron. xxiii. 6.) Solomon not depoſed Abiathar? (1 Kings ii. 27.) Joſephat not commiſſioned prieſts to in-

ſtruct the people? (2 Chron. xvi. 8.) Ezechias not got God's praiſes to be ſung in the words of David and Aſaph? (2 Chron. xix. 30.) &c.

Is it more likely, that Chriſt in the few years of his miſſion, would have preſcribed all the trivial particulars to be obſerved in all ſucceeding ages, than that God would have ſpecified at the creation, every article of the victuals and raiment for Adam's deſcendants in their different tribes and tongues to the end of time? or rather, that as God has left the determination of the one to mens own prudence, after conſidering their great variety of conſtitutions and climates, ſo has Chriſt the other to theirs, after finding that what ſuits one genius, time, or place, may not another?

VII. It is true, Chriſt ſaid, his kingdom was not of this world: but it may be as well inferred from hence, that he has neither religion or ſubjects here, and of courſe, that bearing no rule but in his kingdom to come, he abandons us, whilſt here, to our reſpective ſocieties; this, I ſay, may be as well inferred, as that no man muſt in any ways meddle with his religious ſyſtem. Is it not plain, by thoſe expreſſions he only meant to obviate the jealouſy of the Romans, raiſed from a report of his having given himſelf out for king of the Jews; and to ſignify that his errand upon earth was merely to bear witneſs to the truth, againſt the deluge of idolatry and impiety, that very nigh overwhelmed the ſame, by inforcing it, not with the ſanctions of moſaic ſeverity, but evangelical lenity? And really I cannot ſee, how faith and conſcience could be confined within more moderate bounds, than to be ſubmitted to human authority in matters of indifference, nor how any one, that did not delight in unbounded

liberty,

liberty, not to ſay worſe of it, would deny the dependence.

VIII. Should it be ſaid, ſome ceremonials are abominations to the Lord for having been prophaned by the application made thereof to popiſh ſuperſtition: St. Paul, ſpeaking of idolatries, as has been already obſerved, ſhews the argument to betray much weakneſs and ignorance. Who could in reaſon make a difficulty of calling in even a liturgy, the firſt day of the week *Sunday*, for its having been particularly dedicated to, and ſet apart by our pagan anceſtors for the worſhip of the ſun? or of erecting an equeſtrian figure to the honour of a prince, for the practice having been originally idolatrous?

IX. It is again objected, that, having broke the chains of blind obedience, by ſhaking off the yoke of Rome, and aſſerting that liberty, into which it has pleaſed heaven to call us by the goſpel, of working of our ſalvation by our own endeavours and underſtandings of the holy ſcriptures, which are alone ſufficient thereto, without having recourſe to the laws and commandments of men; after this, ſay they, how ſhamefully inconſiſtent muſt it not be in Proteſtants, of whatever denomination they be, to ſubmit us again to the like ſervitude, or in us tamely to acquieſce therein; as we may as well return from whence we came, the Egyptian bondage and darkneſs of popery, and thus juſtify the perſecuting ſpirit as well of pagan as chriſtian Rome?

But in withdrawing from Rome, does it follow, we muſt have renounced every point of her religious ceremony, even dictated by ſound reaſon and common ſenſe? or is it certain, her errors conſiſted as well in her rites as dogmas? there never has been known ſuch a thorough reform of

any

any government, civil or religious, but that ſome remains of the former have innocently ſtill ſubſiſted, which I think was the caſe with many ceremonial parts of popery; if it was ſo with the dogmatical, will appear by the ſequel.

PACIFICUS.

LETTER XXIX.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, April 26, 1767.

I. THE laſt objection mentioned in my foregoing letter, bearing harder upon articles of religion, than church ceremonies, I ſhall here undertake to ſolve it, ſo far as relates thereto, by proving the right of the eſtabliſhed church to have her's ſubſcribed to; the little room there is for the charge, of ſome of them co-inciding with Rome's erroneous tenets, and for that of any of them being unſcriptural.

I ſay then, that the exacting this ſubſcription for the ſake of avoiding diverſities of opinions, and eſtabliſhing of conſent, touching true religion in the following order, and form of words, taken from the 36th cannon of the church: "I N. N. "do willingly and *ex animo*, ſubſcribe to the 3 "articles above mentioned, and to all things that "are contained in them; to wit, 1. that the king "is the only ſupreme head of the church in this "realm, &c. 2. That the Common Prayer Book "and the Ordinal, contain nothing in them con-"trary to the word of God, may be lawfully "uſed,

" uſed, and that I myſelf will uſe it in public " prayer, and the adminiſtration of the ſacra- " ments, and none other; and 3. That I allow " and acknowledge the 39 articles agreeable to " the word of God." All this, I ſay, ſeems as warrantable as the tendering an oath of allegiance, or any other, by the government, for preſerving unanimity in the ſtate; or is it not more than probable, it was the want of this in the church, which was the fatal ſource of thoſe civil commotions, the moſt calamitous, perhaps, England ever beheld?

II. And indeed, I cannot comprehend what colour there can be for refuſing this right. Pray might the apoſtles at Jeruſalem not have accompanied their letters to the faithful of Antioch (Acts xv. 23.) with this or the like injunction, " See brethren that you receive amongſt you as " preachers of the word, but ſuch as will ſign " this formula; I willingly and *ex animo* re- " nounce the neceſſity of circumciſion; and the " only thing I hold needful for gentile proſelytes " is to abſtain from meats offered to idols, blood, " things ſtrangled, and fornication?" or did the letters themſelves not imply as much?

III. This ſeems ſo rational, that all antiquity, when any ſtrange doctrine ſprang up, had recourſe to confeſſions of faith and ſubſcriptions to guard againſt them, and ſhew their orthodoxy. The very reformers did not think the example beneath their imitation; beſides many more confeſſions and ſignatures, which I could enumerate, in the diet of Augſburg alone there were three exhibited; one by Melancton, for the Lutherans; another by Swinglius, for the rigid Sacramentarians; and a third by Bucer, who, deſirous to ſtrike out a medium, fell between two ſtools.

Did

Did the ſynod of Rotterdam not oblige the miniſters of Holland to ſubſcribe the confeſſion received amongſt the reformed in that country? was there not one held at Perth, in Scotland, in the ſame year with that of Dort, to get the Preſbyterians to receive the religious articles drawn up by King James the firſt? or what difference can there be aſſigned, as to the thing's legality, between ſigning the Preſbyterian covenant, and ſubſcribing a religious creed? &c. why therefore ſhould our national church not be allowed the ſame prerogative? Did the very Brownists not make a confeſſion of their faith?

IV. Nor, after all, would this be reducing people to ſomething as bad as Rome's diſcarded ſervitude. Is there no difference betwixt being led blindfold and ſeeing one's own way? being tryed by an Inquiſition, where no witneſs appears, and at Weſtminſter Hall, where confronting is in uſe? or betwixt the dictatorial decrees of a Trenten juncto, packed by a pope, under the pretence of a divine guidance; and the verdict of a free Engliſh jury or parliament, where the iſſue wholly reſts upon a fair argument and uncontroul; this indeed might be pretended to by ſuch as eſpouſed this maxim; *a chriſtian man is maſter of every thing:* but was ever diſclaimed by the ſoberer ſort, who barely grounded their ſeparation upon finding her in groſs traditionary errors, after comparing her tenets with the ſcriptures; the ſame as the Greeks have done, who yet maintain a reaſonably moderate church authority.

V. But, all Proteſtants, ſay they, muſt own, the ſcripture contains every thing neceſſary to ſalvation, without having recourſe to the doctrines and commandments and men; now what are the 39 articles, and thoſe artificial creeds, inſerted in

the

the liturgy, elſe but the doctrines and commandments of men? for ſhould we ſearch the ſcripture from Geneſis to the Apocalypſe, we could ſcarcely find one article thereof in expreſs terms; it is true, it is pretended they are deduced from thence; but is this deduction not of man's workmanſhip, and conſequently the article not his doctrine and commandment? But who could imagine, the doctrines and commandments of men, which Chriſt diſproved, meant any other than, as he himſelf ſuggeſts (Mat. xv. 5.) ſuch as claſh with thoſe of God? wherefore could the articles in queſtion be made appear contrary, or even beſide the ſcripture, I would give up the point; but ſo far from that, they perfectly agree; what I ſhall endeavour to ſhew in the ſequel, by anſwering the difficulties I find made thereto.

VI. Nor is wording an article of religion in terms not expreſſed in ſcripture, to be reckoned the ſame as making it the commandment of man, provided the expreſſions on both ſides implicate alike, any more than a perſon that is fitted with a new ſuit of cloaths, ſhould be deemed the work of his taylor. It ſavours too much of the pedant, petty fogger and quack, to be fond of technical terms of art; and indeed I ſhrewdly ſuſpect that he who would make a difficulty of ſubſcribing their equivalent, would ſcarcely, unleſs, perhaps, by way of form, for lucrative views, underwrite the words themſelves. Who would not think it equally the ſame, ſhould a thing be called a ſquare, or a figure with four equal ſides and angles? nor do I think Rome's tenets could in reaſon have been found fault with, or refuſed the aſſent of any private judgment whatſoever, had they been ſynonimous with the ſcripture phraſes, or fairly deduced from thence; a fair deduction being of

ſuch

ſuch a nature, that as a perfect beauty enraptures the heart, ſo does that foreſtall the mind's ſuffrage, if at all ſuſceptible of its impreſſions, or judge of her energy, there being nothing in the concluſion, that had not been virtually contained in the premiſes; ſure whoever ſays, every whole is greater than its part, ſays as much as, that a foot is more than an inch. I muſt own, I ſee no convincing proof that what is called the apoſtles creed, or any other ſummary of articles now in practiſe, could be otherwiſe than by way of inference, from their conformity withal, collected from the ſcriptures, as the different places referred to for the purpoſe from St. Paul (Rom. vi. 17. 1 Tim. iv. 6. vi. 3. and 2 Tim. i. 13.) may well be underſtood of the whole of what he had preached to thoſe he wrote to: and it is ſtrange Dr. Burnet would have pretended the thing, unleſs he meant likewiſe to eſtabliſh upon the ſtrength of the firſt paſſage, the neceſſity of tradition being a rule of faith: why ſhould theſe expreſſions, "form of doctrines of wholeſome and ſound words," &c. not mean the whole of what Chriſt taught, and he preached, eſpecially in the mouth of him who dealt ſo much in tropes? or do theſe words, *even the words of Jeſus Chriſt*, in Tim. vi. 3. not imply as much?

VI. This letter, Mr. Printer, I conclude with returning thanks to your correſpondent *Veridicus*, of the 20th of February, for obligingly lending his aid for the proſecution of my plan, but it gives me ſome concern, the cenſoriouſneſs of the age is ſuch, as, be the undertaking never ſo laudable, to ſuſpect the views of its projector, methinks he had far better have waited the event, and forborn his ſurmiſes, until I had afforded ſomething leſs *myſterious* to ground them upon.

As

As to the doubts he raiſes, if a weil wiſher to the late revolution, may with applauſe fall upon his knees, not indeed out of reſpect to the bumper he holds in his hand, but to our glorious deliverer from popery and ſlavery, whoſe health he means to toaſt: why ſhould we not ſay as much of the kneeling communicant? or that this poſture is commendable and edifying, being intended in thankſgiving for his partaking of the fruits of the croſs, commemorated in this rite? if ſome people are ſo vulgarly ſimple as to conſtrue the practice into a worſhip of the elements, may they not be ſo, as to look upon uncovering the head at religious meetings in the ſame light? muſt we therefore all turn Quakers? Was it not for undeceiving ſuch, and not for any ſcruple ſhe entertained touching its legality, that the church has condeſcended thus to explain the ceremony, the ſame as ſhe has the Queen's ſupremacy (art. 36.)? or is there any ceremony, however innocent, that may not be thought unwarrantable by one claſs or other of men?

VIII. The epiſcopal order might upon the Queen's acceſſion, be pacifick, as appears by their letters to Bullinger, at Zurick, in Switzerland, though, when ſhe declared her mind, they might be otherwiſe diſpoſed, as might be the caſe with Whitgift, until ordered ſome years after to keep a tight hand, nor is it on the day of battle, nor until the dividing the ſpoils, that the troops of the ſame army are tempted to ſquabble.

When Veridicus has ſhewn univerſal toleration not attended with the ill conſequence, I ſhall attribute it not to the diverſity of divided religious opinions, but to the ſpirit of intollerance; and he might obſerve, by the concluſion of my letter, a little patience would have ſhewn him, we are

in the main ſo far agreed, as that *inforcing uniformity*, as he calls it, is productive but of revolt or hypocriſy.

IX. For Papiſts reckoning the Latin Maſs a matter of indifference, I refer him not to popiſh doctors, whoſe works I am as great a ſtranger, and perhaps as much averſe to as he may be; but to the Council of Trent, (Seſ. 22. cap. 8.) and for the condemnation thereof, by the eſtabliſhed church, to (art. 24.) the only points that were for my purpoſe in that place, without inquiring which church is right, or which wrong, the proper province of controvertiſts for or againſt popery, not mine to diſcuſs; thus far I have endeavoured to ſatisfy his doubts, in hopes of continuing his good offices towards forwarding the topic of

PACIFICUS.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, April 27, 1768.

I. I Entirely agree with the good Pacificus in the methods he propoſes to prevent Proteſtant ſchiſms. All the quarrels of us Proteſtants amongſt ourſelves have been owing to the want of a ſufficient number of ceremonies in our religion. Indeed, our Saviour Chriſt ſeems not to have thought much about the matter, or rather thought differently from Mr. Pacificus; and his apoſtles were ſo taken up with travelling about and preaching, that they did not attend to ſuch important points. But the church of Rome, according to our

our author, having better knowledge, and more leiſure, has ſupplied their wants, and made the religion of Chriſt now ſuch, as a gentleman need not to be aſhamed of.

II. There are alſo peculiar reaſons, which make a religion of more ceremonies and amuſement neceſſary for Engliſhmen.

1. We are in general a phlegmatic melancholy people, too much given to thinking, which is the ruin of all religion. The people ſhould only believe, and let their prieſts think for them. Now, your proceſſions, and bowings, and holy water, and incenſe, and croſſings, would divert this black humour, and make us quite gay and thoughtleſs. I knew a gentleman a few years ago, nearly allied to the firſt family in England, who, in the war before the laſt, was apprehended at Paris, and ſhut up for ſome time in the Baſtile, who declared, that had he not fortunately had a few pins about him, with which he amuſed himſelf by playing at puſh-pin, he verily believed he ſhould have hanged himſelf. Nothing like a puſh-pin religion, Mr. Printer, for over-thoughtful Engliſhmen.

2. It is ſaid, and I partly believe it, that there are very many Atheiſts and Deiſts among us, the reaſon of which can be no other than becauſe we have no viſible God among us; whereas, if we would but adopt the ceremonious religion of our good neighbours, the French and Italians, there would not be an Atheiſt or an unbeliever in the kingdom: For we ſhould then have a God in a box, ſhut up in our churches, and carried about our ſtreets, and every body bowing their heads and worſhipping him. Old Biſhop Latimer indeed calls him, *a God that plays at bo-peep with his worſhippers, and hides himſelf*

ſelf behind a piece of bread; but the good biſhop, we know, loved a joke.

III. 3. Your Ledger, Mr. Printer, often teems with complaints of the variety of religious ſects in England; and the righteous ſoul of Pacificus is above meaſure grieved at the ſight; for it is a fatal ſign, that Engliſhmen will not be hoodwinked, but ſee their way before them to the other world, as well as in this, with their own eyes.

Now this hideous variety of opinion can only be reduced by the introduction of pictures and images of God and our Lady, and her Son, and the Saints, into our churches and ſtreets, and highways, as we ſee abroad; which images are well called the poor's books, and the rich are content with them by uſe, and deſire no others. By this ſalutary change we might ſpare the expence of our charity-ſchools, which are ſo often complained of, and in time, the bible (and perhaps the preſs itſelf) might be ſuppreſſed, which is a book that by no means ought to be put into the hands of our common people, as I heard lately in public very gravely aſſerted, where, or by whom, it matters not. And thus the people of England would be melted down into one general, unthinking, idiot maſs of uniformity.

As I propoſe to accompany Pacificus in his excellent and well-meant ſcheme and deſign to prevent Proteſtant ſchiſms, I ſhall make a reſerve of ſome other religious ceremonies, which I propoſe to offer as candidates for a reception in this proteſtant nation.

Your humble ſervant,

DEISIDÆMON.

To

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, May 18, 1768.

I. WHEN Pacificus made his late propoſal to the public for enlarging our Engliſh ritual, with borrowing a certain quantity of religious trinkets, proceſſions, and raree-ſhows, which, according to the pious Mr. Joſeph Barretti, preſerve the good Catholics of Italy from hanging and drowning themſelves, and murdering one another, I took the liberty to ſecond the honeſt propoſal, as likely to be of infinite benefit to us phlegmatic Engliſhmen, and to bring us back to our duty to our old mother, the lady upon the ſeven mountains. I expected Mr. Pacificus to have completed this part of his plan, but he has thought proper to divert to another, no leſs in agreement with his benevolent views of reconciling us to Rome. He is therefore now for enlarging our creed. He obſerves that very many in the nation, from reading Clarke, Hoadley, the free and Candid Diſquiſitions, the Confeſſional, &c. find a difficulty in ſwallowing not a few of the articles which we ſomewhat heedleſsly retained out of the mint-ſhop of the Vatican, at the reformation. Common ſenſe, if not common honeſty, would dictate a removal of theſe difficulties.

II. Not ſo Mr. Pacificus. Inſtead of docking off the objectionable articles, which were kept in to anſwer the end of bringing over Pacificus and his brethren to our church [an end they have never anſwered] and giving eaſe to ſcrupulous minds, he is for plaguing theſe honeſt men more, and haraſſing them out of their ſcruples, if not out

of their lives, by making them ſet their hands to a whole Romiſh breviary and miſſal, inſtead of an Engliſh common prayer book. Not that he ſays this in direct terms; that would be rather too bare faced, Mr. Printer, in your paper; though the Catholic apologiſt has aſſerted it roundly, and with ſuch a laſh upon any of us for pretending to conſcience in matters of religion, as may make us well look about us. I tranſcribe his very words, p. 119. "The very cauſes of conſcience, that "gave room here in England to the reformation, "and helped to overturn the Catholic religion, "threaten the preſent eſtabliſhed church with the "like diſſolution. There ſeems to be no proba- "ble means for it to retrieve its honour, to revive "the true ſpirit of chriſtianity, to emerge out of "lax diſcipline, and to acquire reſpect, conſiſt- "ency, and ſtability, than to ſeek an union with "the Catholic church."

III. But one may eaſily know Pacificus's meaning by his mumping, and that he is fully in the ſecret of this formidable hero of the year 1768. However, as his modeſty, good creature! will not ſuffer him to ſpeak out, I ſhall gladly help him all I can, and therefore ſhall tranſcribe the following articles out of pope Pius's creed, to be conſidered and digeſted by your readers, againſt the time that Pacificus ſhall be ready to lay his whole plan before the Public.

1. In the moſt holy ſacrament of the euchariſt there is really and ſubſtantially the body and blood together with the ſoul and divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and there is a converſion of the whole ſubſtance of the bread into his body, and of the whole ſubſtance of the wine into his blood; which converſion the Catholic church calls tranſubſtantiation.

2. I ſtedfaſtly believe there is a purgatory, and that the ſouls detained therein are helped by the prayers of the faithful.

3. I alſo believe, that the ſaints, who reign with Chriſt, are to be worſhipped and prayed to, and that they do pray to God for us; and that their relics are to be venerated.

4. I moſt firmly aſſert, that the images of Chriſt and the mother of God, who was always a virgin, are to be had and retained; and that due honour and worſhip is to be given them.

5. I do alſo affirm, that the power of indulgences was left by Chriſt to his church, and that the uſe of them is very helpful to chriſtian people.

6. I acknowledge the holy catholic apoſtolic Roman church to be the mother and miſtreſs of all other churches; and I promiſe and ſwear true obedience to the pope of Rome, who is the ſucceſſor of St. Peter, prince of the apoſtles, and the vicar of Jeſus Chriſt.

IV. Mr. Printer, I give you theſe articles, as candidates for the reception of our countrymen, word for word as they are in pope Pius's creed. Naming them only will be ſufficient recommendation to Engliſhmen. Were the laſt article, for inſtance, only once cordially embraced by us, we ſhould have no more diſturbance or diſputes about religion or liberty, or any thing elſe; we ſhould be a ſet of the ſame quiet, tame, ſubmiſſive, and orderly creatures, as Mr. Joſeph Barretti's modern Italians. Almighty God, according to the ſame author, would not be angry with us, whatever we did, ſo long as we ſubmitted to the holy Father, his Vicegerent, and we ſhould be ſure of getting ſoon out of Purgatory into Paradiſe, with a parcel

of cardinals, and prieſts, and monks, and nuns in our company.

No more at preſent, Sir, from

Your humble ſervant,

DEISIDÆMON.

LETTER XXX.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, May 20, 1768.

I. THE already propoſed objections are the only that at preſent occur to me, in general, made to ſubſcribing the liturgy and thirty-nine articles: I ſhall only add, by way of obviating others, that points of diſcipline, or indifference are ſuch, concerning which the ſcripture gives no poſitive directions, which it conſequently leaves to the prudent diſpoſal of the church; whereas thoſe of faith and belief are abſolutely either enjoined or forbidden therein, and that at the riſque of people's ſalvation, which puts them out of the church's reach, as having no power of preſcribing other terms thereof, than thoſe already laid down.

II. Hence it is, that, ſhould it be objected, the difference here is ſcarce diſcernable, the very ſame act of kneeling, for inſtance, at the ſacrament, being a matter of indifference in one man, and idolatrous in another; the reply is obvious, viz. that the difference, however, often imperceptible, as depending upon the motive of action, may be as real as that betwixt premeditated murder and chance medley.

III. Hence

III. Hence likewiſe it is, that ſhould it be ſaid, St. Paul declares, he would eat no fleſh, though a matter of indifference, while the world ſtands, ſhould it offend his brother; (1 Cor. viii. 13.) the eſtabliſhed church ſhould, therefore, forbear every trifle apt to hurt non-conformiſts: Should this, I ſay, be ſaid, my anſwer is, that I would readily agree to the conſequence, provided theſe acknowledge their ignorance to be ſo groſs, as to imagine the croſs, for example, to have been ſo defiled by popery, as never more to be lawfully uſed in baptiſm, the ſame as the gentile converts thought fleſh to have been polluted for being ſacrificed to idols, and at the ſame time aſſign any tolerable reaſon for the ſame, but not otherwiſe; there being only ſuch that merit condeſcenſion, which has already been carried ſo far, even to the prejudice of legal eſtabliſhments, in the more than once new modeling of the public liturgy, which, by the way, was not the caſe with Paul's well meant complaiſance, that they muſt be loſt to all ſhame, who would ſolicit any further amendments, without the ſtrongeſt and moſt convincing reaſons in their ſupport.

IV. Mean while, therefore, until ſuch be alledged I ſhall proceed with my plan, by endeavouring to ſatisfy the objections made to particular points of the thirty-nine articles and liturgy, and begin with ſuch as inſinuate ſome paſſages thereof to be tainted with popery, than which, I muſt own, nothing could be more exceptionable; after the ſame manner, therefore, that I have above begged the aſſiſtance of the non-conforming and church divines, ſo are the popiſh here called upon in vindication of thoſe arguments which their beſt champions availed themſelves of, to ex-

poſe ſome pretended inconſiſtencies of the eſtabliſhed church.

V. In the ſhort church catechiſm is put the following queſtion: *What is the inward part, or thing ſignified?* To which this anſwer is given; "The body and blood of Chriſt, which, are ve-" rily and indeed taken, and received by the " faithful in the Lord's ſupper." Theſe words are made a handle of, for charging the eſtabliſhed church with the highly abſurd tenet of Chriſt's real preſence; inſomuch that Mr. Dryden in his Hind and Panther, writing after his turning papiſt, to make, as is thought, amends for the ridicule caſt upon popery by his Spaniſh Friar, thus diverts himſelf and readers at her expence:

A real preſence all her ſons allow,
And yet 'tis flat idolatry to bow:
Her novices are taught that bread and wine
Are but the viſible and outward ſign
Received by thoſe who in communion join.
But th' inward grace, or the thing ſignify'd,
His blood and body, who to ſave us dy'd;
The faithful this thing ſignify'd receive;
What is't thoſe faithful then partake or leave?
For what is ſignify'd and underſtood
Is, by her own confeſſion, fleſh and blood;
Then, by the ſame acknowledgment, we know,
They take the ſign, and take the ſubſtance too:
The literal ſenſe is hard to fleſh and blood,
But nonſenſe never can be underſtood.

VI. But our bard, I fancy, will, upon an impartial ſcrutiny, be ſoon found not ſuch an adept in polemics and theology, as in the art of rhiming; and, of courſe, however, the religious turn he has taken might be thought of advantage to his ſpiritual welfare; it could, upon ſuch ſlight grounds as here are expreſſed, for becoming a

proſelite

proſelite, have reflected but little honour on the communion he embraced.

Why has he not confronted this catechiſtical paſſage with this more clear rubric at the end of the communion ſervice? "the natural body and blood of our Saviour Chriſt are in heaven, and not here; it being againſt the truth of Chriſt's natural body to be at one time in more places than one." How could he take, according to the rules of true criticiſm, the firſt in a ſenſe incompatible with the ſecond, if it was ſuſceptible of another? Would he be thus dealt with himſelf upon a ſimilar occaſion? Now, that the firſt and ſecond do not ſo far diſagree as he may imagine, appears, not only without ſtraining the words, but even by preſerving their moſt natural ſignification. For is it not obvious that *verily* and *indeed* affect here not the body and blood, but their reception? Now this may be real, though thoſe may be only figurative. May a king, for inſtance, not verily and indeed take to him a royal conſort, and that by his proxy, although but his repreſentative? Why, therefore, may the faithful not verily and indeed receive Chriſt's body and blood in the Lord's ſupper; though here ſhould be only the emblems thereof, which may be called by the name of that whoſe types they are, as Cæſar's picture is called Cæſar?

VII. Beſides, he ſhould know that, not the catechiſm or liturgy, but the thirty-nine articles ſhould be reckoned ſtandards of belief chargeable upon the eſtabliſhed church. Now the twenty-eighth ſays, that, "by faith alone Chriſt's body is "received;" and the twenty-ninth, "that the "wicked and ſuch as are void of a lively faith "receive not the body of Chriſt, but only preſs "with their teeth the ſacrament or ſign thereof;"

which,

which, if true, muſt overthrow the corporal preſence. And, indeed, were the miſſal or popiſh liturgy a rule of faith, Moliniſts would beat Janſeniſts in ſome points of heterodoxy, as liberty, from even conſtraint, which Janſenius allowed ſufficient for merit, ſeems, in the ſervice of the fourth Sunday after Pentecoſt, to be fairly deſtroyed.

VIII. In ſhort, juſt emerging from popery and all its abominations, it was not eaſy to keep clear of all its dregs; an inveterate habit is not ſo ſoon rooted out; this is the eaſieſt accounted for, as, on the one hand, that church had to contend with ſome ſects, which would have allegoriſed away the Lord's ſupper; whence it is no wonder, ſhe might ſeem to incline to the oppoſite extream; a juſt temperament being ſo difficult to light on, that Auguſtin, though otherwiſe an acute reaſoner, arguing againſt the Pelagian freewillers, is claimed by the predeſtinarians, and that on the other, ſhe would by all means avoid eſtranging papiſts from the infant reformation; whence it is, that, as Dr. Burnet obſerves, Queen Elizabeth got the above rubric ſtruck out, which was re-aſſumed at the reſtoration. Such pious frauds we find practiſed by the very apoſtles: Thus Peter, tho' ſenſible the party-wall betwixt the Gentiles and Jews ſubſiſted no more, yet declined meſſing with thoſe, for fear of ſhocking theſe (Gal. ii. 12.); it is true he was reprehended by Paul for it, but with what juſtice, when himſelf, for the like motive got Timothy circumciſed (Acts xvi. 3.); and, at the perſwaſion of James, got himſelf purified in the Temple (Act. xxi. 26.)?

IX. To conclude this letter with a few ſtrictures upon that of your correſpondent Deiſidæmon, I muſt obſerve, Mr. Printer, that, unleſs he takes a more

a more ſerious turn, he will be ſoon ſurfeited with the company of one of my phlegm and gloom. I have no caſt for humour and railing, nor can I yield ſuch implicit faith to the facetious Lord Shaftſbury, as to bring myſelf to think them proper criterions of religious truth or error. So far from it, that, if I miſtake not, they are often attended with pernicious effects, by many an innocent, but weak perſon being laughed not only out of the obſervance of indifferent formalities, but even the well-known and univerſally acknowledged duty of honeſty and virtue, for which I appeal to every one's experience, never ſo little converſant in what we call polite and gay life.

X. Should, therefore, this gentleman's view be to decry ceremonies in a jocular way, I ſhall not envy the number of his proſelites made upon ſo ſandy a foundation, where neither reaſon, or argument, but a mere vein for pleaſantry and drollery have a ſhare. It is ſtrange that a merry mood could have infatuated him, or biſhop Latimer, ſo as not to ſee that their pun of a *bo-peep playing God* reflects as much upon his *hiding himſelf behind a piece* of fleſh as of *bread*. The queſtion is not, whether a gorgeous and *puſh-pin* religion, with a glut of popiſh entertaining and *amuſing* ceremonies, ſuch as proceſſions, bowings, holy water, incenſe, and croſſings, is a proper ſpecific for diverting the black humour of Engliſhmen, or curing their itch for deiſm, atheiſm, and ſplitting into different ſects, which, by the bye, proves not to anſwer, witneſs the caſe of Jerome Cardan, Jordanus Brunus, Vanini, Servetus, Socinus, &c. all natives of Italy or Spain, the very centers of popiſh pageantry; this is not, I ſay, the queſtion; but if, in conſequence of the judicious choice, the planners of our Liturgy have

have made of the ceremonies to be retained upon the reformation, as expreſſed in the preface thereof, and if the reaſons aſſigned in particular by the thirtieth canon of the church for retaining the ſign of the croſs in baptiſm, their uſe could be juſtifiable.

XI. Of this, I am ſenſible, he was aware; but fancied his merry ſtratagem better calculated for diverting me from what he gibingly calls my excellent and well-meant ſcheme, than putting himſelf, divine like, upon ſhewing my reaſons for the points in hand, or replies to the objections unſatisfactory. But be it known to him, and ſuch as are inclined to honour me with their company for the ſake of either obſtructing or promoting my plan, that, warned by Atalanta's miſcarriage, for ſtooping to pick up the golden apples, I ſhall wave all jollity, inviduous imputations, and controvertial points, unleſs to my purpoſe, and that even then they will find me, like the good old Iſraelites (Nehem. iv. 17.) ambidexterous, with the trowel in one hand, whilſt the other is at the ſame time wielding the ſword.

PACIFICUS.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, June 16, 1768.

I. I Have given my word of honour, and I ſcorn to break it, that I will furniſh you with a perpetual comment and illuſtration of Mr. Pacificus's pious endeavours to reconcile us Church of England folks to the good old gentlewoman at Rome, dame Clement XIII.

I find he has been dabbling in the work of one of his predeceſſors, Francis St. Clare, alias father Davenport, who, in the days of Laud, when there were ſerious thoughts of uniting the two hierarchies, wrote a paraphraſtical expoſition of our Thirty-nine Articles, and, like a dexterous workman, fully made out how ambitious and capable our Engliſh articles were of receiving a Catholic ſenſe. With this author, and his views before him, the grave Mr. Pacificus dubs himſelf a Defender of our Articles againſt all aſperſions of their being tainted with Popery; and gives us a caſt of his office, in a ſolemn vindication of the uſe of the Croſs in one of our Sacraments, and of the belief of the Real Preſence of Chriſt's natural body, fleſh, and blood, in the other.

II. The Sign of the Croſs is of ſuch infinite uſe in making Holy Water, in Chriſtening Bells, and Chriſtening Children, in driving away Devils, Witches, and Diſeaſes, and a thouſand other ſalutary purpoſes; that a good Catholic, like Mr. Pacificus, may well be excuſed ſtanding up for it: and the more, as it is found ſo ſucceſsful an implement in carrying on their miſſions in England. "You make uſe of the Sign of the Croſs to mark a child's forehead in baptiſm, ſay they;

now

now Jeſus Chriſt appointed no ſuch ceremony, but you took it from us Catholics; and if you make uſe of it at one time, why ought not you to follow the Church in making uſe of it at other times, when you get up in the morning, and when you go to bed; at ſermon-time, at your meal-times, and all other times, when the Church commands it?"

I wiſh good Mr. Pacificus would help a poor Proteſtant how to anſwer this knock-down argument of their miſſionaries; and, at the ſame time, ſolve the difficulty propoſed to them many years ago; why, as they keep a ſolemn feaſt in honour of the Croſs, on which Chriſt died, they do not alſo keep a ſolemn feaſt in honour of the Aſs, on which he rode into Jeruſalem?

III. With regard to his doctrine of the Real Preſence of Chriſt's natural body in the Sacrament, John Hales, of Eton, ſcrupled not to call it *real nonſenſe*, in any conſtruction of the words, proteſtant or popiſh. But it would have been kind in ſuch a high-learned ſcholar, and good proteſtant, as Mr. Pacificus, to have informed his readers, that there was a long paſſage in Edward VI's articles, againſt this Real Preſence; which paſſage was ſtruck out upon a revival of the articles under Queen Elizabeth, by way of trimming matters, and reconciling the papiſts to our Church; though, like all ſuch trimming buſineſſes, it has never yet anſwered in bringing one Catholic over to the Church of England; but has been, and is, one grand inſtrument of bringing over yearly a harveſt of proteſtants to the Church of Rome.

IV. It would likewiſe have been an obliging condeſcenſion, to his leſs knowing readers, if Mr. Pacificus had told them, that the latter part of

our

our Church Catechiſm, which relates to the Sacraments, was not the work of the original Compilers of the Liturgy at the Reformation, but was fabricated principally by one Bancroft, a biſhop not of the beſt character, and under the direction of James I. a king, who, as lord Bolingbroke characterizes him, was not ill-affected to popery, tho' he was, all his life long, writing againſt it.

V. I muſt farther obſerve, that, from a Defender of our Church and Articles, we might have expected an hint, that ſome of our biſhops, and others moſt eminently learned and good men amongſt us, have loudly called out for an alteration of many ſtumbling expreſſions in our Communion-ſervice, as well as of that paſſage in the Church Catechiſm, which Pacificus makes ſuch a parade with, and which truly does well ſerve his purpoſe, viz. that *the body and blood of Chriſt* are *verily* and *indeed* taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper.

He that can ſwallow this in the way that Mr. Pacificus adviſes, needeth not, I ſuppoſe, to open his mouth much wider to ſwallow his round Wafer Tranſubſtantiation.

Your very humble Servant,

DEISIDÆMON.

LETTER XXXI.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, June 18, 1768.

I. IF what I have hitherto offered does not ſuffice to ſtrip the catechiſtical expreſſion of a papiſtical ſenſe, let your readers, Mr. Printer, take the words of ſome of our moſt eminent divines, to ſee if they may be thought more appoſite for evincing the matter in point, than my way of reaſoning; or rather, if we do not in ſubſtance agree.

Let us hear Mr. Hales on the Communion Service. "Some ſay it is the body of God, into which the bread is tranſubſtantiated; ſome that the bread, remaining what it was, there paſſes to the ſoul with the real body of God, in a ſecret unknown manner. Some, that a farther degree of faith is ſupplied us. Others, that ſome degree of God's grace, whatever it be, is exhibited, which, otherwiſe, would be wanting. All which conceits muſt needs fall out (as having no other grounds than conjecture) but weakly founded: to ſettle you therefore in your judgment, both of the thing itſelf, and the true uſe of it, I will recommend to your conſideration theſe few propoſitions: 1. There is nothing given in the communion but bread and wine. 2. The bread and wine are ſigns indeed, but not of any thing there exhibited, but of ſomething given long ſince, even of Chriſt given for us upon the croſs. 3. Jeſus Chriſt is eaten in no ſenſe at the communion table, neither ſpiritually, by virtue of any thing done there,

there, nor really, neither metaphorically, nor literally. Indeed that which is eaten, I mean the bread, is called Chriſt by a metaphor; but it is eaten truly and properly bread. Laſtly, the uſes and ends of the Lord's Supper can be no more than ſuch as are mentioned in the ſcriptures, and they are but two, 1. The commemoration of the death and paſſion of the ſon of God, ſpecified by himſelf in the inſtitution of the ſacrament. 2. To teſtify our union with Chriſt, and communion one with another, which St. Paul has taught us."

II. Archbiſhop Wake thus expreſſes himſelf on the church catechiſm; "Are the body and blood of Chriſt really diſtributed to every communicant in this ſacrament; no, they are not, that which is given by the prieſt to the communicant is, as to its nature, the ſame after conſecration that it was before, viz. bread and wine, only altered as to its ſignification." On another occaſion he ſays, "the elements are not altered, they continue not only after conſecration, but in the very receiving of them, the ſame they were before, bread and wine, without any bodily ſubſtance beſides, either veiled under the appearance, or received together with them;" and ſo ſays biſhop Patrick, "The bread and wine remain bread and wine, after the ſanctifying them; they are bread and wine in their ſubſtance, and the body and blood of Chriſt in the ſpiritual uſe to which they are appointed."

III. Biſhop Fleetwood aſſures us, "the church of England knows no bodily preſence, nor any change of bread and wine into the natural body and blood of Chriſt: to ſay the bread and wine after conſecration, become the natural body and blood of Chriſt, is to deſtroy the very nature of

the ſacrament, and to make the ſign to be the thing ſignified: for if the bread and wine be ſubſtantially changed into the body and blood of Chriſt, then is the ſign loſt, becauſe there is no bread and wine remaining, which is not only contrary to ſenſe, but to the very nature of the ſacrament: as therefore in the ſacrament of baptiſm, the water ſtill remains true natural water after its ſanctification to the myſtical waſhing away of ſin: ſo do the creatures of bread and wine remain ſtill natural bread and wine, after the conſecration of them, to the end and uſe appointed by Chriſt.

IV. To mention no more of thoſe who wrote in the ſame ſtrain, I ſhall cloſe with Doctor Clark, who judiciouſly obſerves, "that the bread and wine are not themſelves literally the body and blood of Chriſt, but the inward thing ſignified by theſe outward ſymbols, is the body and blood of Chriſt; juſt as in the ſacrament of baptiſm the being immerſed in water, is not itſelf the death and burial of Chriſt, but only an outward ſign: the inward thing ſignified thereby, is the being buried with Chriſt in his death. And the body and blood of Chriſt is verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper, juſt in the ſame manner as perſons baptiſed do verily and indeed die, and are baptiſed with Chriſt. No man was ever ſo abſurd as to underſtand the one literally; and there is no more reaſon to underſtand the other ſo: but by both, men are intituled, if they be worthy receivers, to the ſpiritual benefits purchaſed by Chriſt's death." Upon the church catechiſm he writes thus, "Had not the church of Rome, by a prodigious and incredible ſuppoſition, taught that the bread and wine were changed into the ſubſtance of the body and

and blood of Chriſt, I ſuppoſe it would never, upon reading the words of the inſtitution, have entered into the imagination of any perſon in his ſenſes, that they were to be underſtood otherwiſe than figuratively, any more than ſtyling himſelf the door, the vine, and the like paſſages, which no man ever miſunderſtood; and yet the manner of expreſſion is the very ſame, as when he ſaid, *This is my body*. But when once men give themſelves up to follow blindly, and implicitly blind guides, or, which is worſe, guides that are not blind; there can nothing be invented ſo abſurd, nothing ſo idolatrous, nothing ſo profane, but may, by a ſtrong deluſion, be made a fundamental and neceſſary part of religion."

How could it therefore be ſuppoſed, the eſtabliſhed church could have ever meant to teach the real preſence by the above expreſſions? Or were theſe divines not as competent judges of her true meaning as the popiſh? What then muſt become of our rhimer's *nonſenſe?* Or who is this epithet with more juſtice to be fathered upon? the compilers of the catechiſm or his bardſhip, and popiſh encomiaſts?

V. This is the heavieſt charge of her agreement with popery, I find made to the eſtabliſhed church; there are a few more, which, though of leſs importance, may yet not be amiſs to canvaſs; but ſhall defer them till my next, to make room for a few animadverſions upon Deiſidæmon's letter of May 18. The flattering hopes of his company, throughout the whole of my pacific but unthankful ſcheme, afforded me no ſmall ſatisfaction, as I have often experienced, a merry fellow traveller much deadens the fatigues of a painful journey: but, methinks, I perceive the accompliſhment of what I apprehended in my laſt, that

if he has not already taken his leave, I am not like to enjoy it long; he ſeems diſheartened at finding himſelf miſtaken in the groundleſs conjecture, that I meant to propoſe putting up images of God, of the Lady, of her Son, and of the Saints, in Churches, Streets, and Highways, to ſerve as books for the poor, and even rich, with many other gewgaws he keeps *in petto*, and offering them as candidates (an expreſſion well adapted to this electioneering ſeaſon) to the acceptance of phlegmatic Engliſhmen; what therefore can I expect his caſe will be, when he comes to find his diſappointment in the truth of another not leſs airy notion of his, viz. that I aim at no leſs a thing than the preſenting them with the Breviary and Miſſal for an Engliſh Common Prayer Book, and Pope Pius's Creed for the ſtandard of their belief? What reſolution muſt he come to unleſs wholly to abandon the cauſe, or exchange his humorous for a more ſerious (I ſhould have rather ſaid, frank and ingenuous) tone? By anſwering the invitation given Nonconformiſts, of either pointing to ſuch objectionable parts of our Liturgy as I may overlook; or expoſing by dint of fair argument, not defamation and irony, the weakneſs of my pleas in behalf of ſuch as I undertake to defend?

VI. Prithee what right had he to father ſuch views on me as I never expreſſed? to claſs me with his *invincible hero*, the Popiſh Apologiſt, who, as we may ſee in due time, has, through the groſſeſt of ignorance, betrayed the cauſe he eſpouſed? Will the plan of the Confeſſional, for inſtance, not appear to any conſiderate eye as wearing full as popiſh a complexion as mine? and its author not as completely *mumping* a helluo of the common cauſe, if not by worming in ſome creed

creed of the *vatican Mint Shop* amongſt us, by, at leaſt, ſowering Proteſtant blood, and fomenting faction, as me? or, to ſpeak within bounds, does he not bear as ſtriking a reſemblance to thoſe Foxes and Firebrands, by whoſe machinations, licenſed, nay encouraged by Rome, this land has, we are told, been firſt overſpread with religious diviſions, the nurſery and hot-bed of infidelity? and yet Deiſidæmon, after condemning me, would applaud him.

But as I preſume my laſt letter has, in reſpect to the truth of his ſiniſter inſinuations, undeceived him by this time; I will be judged by himſelf, if a reparation of injured honour and integrity be not in juſtice due from him to his, however, good creature and righteous ſoul.

PACIFICUS.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, July 2, 1768.

I. I Have often thought that the defenders of eſtabliſhed doctrines, which frequently claſh with reaſon and common ſenſe, are much to be pitied. Subſcriptions and declarations in favour of ſuch doctrines make it neceſſary for numbers to adhere to them, out of a point of honour, though they have no better reaſon for the faith they *profeſs* in theſe doctrines, than merely that they are eſtabliſhed.

Pacificus, for example, in your Ledger of June 18, undertakes to defend a paſſage in our Church Catechiſm, which affirms, that *The Body and Blood of Chriſt are verily and indeed taken and received by the Faithful in the Lord's Supper*, as expreſſing a

ſenſe different from Tranſubſtantiation; and he ſets about it, not by ſhewing that the expreſſion will admit of the contrary notion, but by citing the arbitrary comments of certain divines on that paſſage, who have vainly endeavoured to ſtrip it of a papiſtical ſenſe.

II. Indeed, I muſt except the firſt of his authorities, the ever memorable *Hales* of *Eton*, who meddles not with the paſſage as a Commentator, but writing on the Communion in general, moſt expreſsly contradicts not only the doctrine of the Catechiſm, but the commentators, *Wake*, *Patrick*, and *Clarke*. For, he ſays, "Jeſus Chriſt is eaten in *no ſenſe* at the Communion Table, neither *ſpiritually*, by virtue of any thing done there, nor *really*, neither metaphorically nor literally." Conſequently, the metaphor, "by which (as he adds) the bread is called Chriſt," is a *falſe* and *improper* metaphor, ſince what is eaten is *truly* and *properly* Bread, and not Chriſt *in any ſenſe*. And with him Biſhop Fleetwood ſeems to agree, though he hath not expreſſed himſelf ſo preciſely.

III. On the other hand, Wake's jargon "of the Bread and Wine being *altered*, as to its ſignification;" Patrick's hypotheſis, that, "Bread and Wine, after they are *ſanctified*, are the Body and Blood of Chriſt, in the ſpiritual uſe to which they were appointed;" and Dr. Clarke's *inward* thing ſignified by theſe *outward* ſymbols (*viz.*) "the Body and Blood of Chriſt," are totally irreconcileable with the poſitions of honeſt *John Hales*, who ſays, "The Bread and Wine are ſigns indeed, but not of any thing *there exhibited*," (*inwardly* or *outwardly*) "but of ſomething given *long ſince*, even of Chriſt given for us upon the Croſs." *Hales*, therefore, did not believe, that *The Body and Blood of Chriſt are verily and indeed taken and received by*

the

the Faithful in the Lord's Supper; and perhaps the reſt believed as little of it as he; but the Church had ſaid it, and the Act of Uniformity had confirmed it, and theſe, her Fathers and Sons, had ſubſcribed to it; and each of them therefore, inſtead of reſtoring her primitive Proteſtant ſimplicity, choſe rather to varniſh over, as well as they could, the appearances of the ſcarlet raiment of the Lady upon Seven Hills, which every now and then peep through the rents of her original comely apparel.

IV. If I miſtake not, the *profeſſed* deſign of theſe long winded, confuſed letters of *Pacificus*, is to reconcile the Proteſtant Diſſenters to the doctrine and worſhip of the Church of England, as by law eſtabliſhed, and that without altering one tittle of either. But *Pacificus* has much leſs cunning than I am willing to allow him, if he does not ſee that ſuch a deſign is both fooliſh and impracticable. Others therefore, have thought, that this is not his *real* deſign; but that his true plan at the bottom is to reconcile the members of the Church of England to Popery, by ſhewing that the moſt exceptionable and abſurd doctrines of the Roman Church, ſuch as Tranſubſtantiation, are ſuſceptible of a *commodious*, tho' not a ſtrictly Proteſtant ſenſe, and that by the teſtimony of the Church of England's own writers; an artifice, which, if I am rightly informed, has been uſed, not unſucceſsfully by meſſieurs the convertiſſeurs of the Society of Jeſus now labouring in their ſeveral vocations amongſt us.

V. But as a correſpondent of your's, who ſigns himſelf *Deiſidæmon*, hath ſo completely unmaſked him, there is no occaſion to dwell upon other tokens than that able writer hath mentioned, that ſuch is in truth the *honeſt* purpoſe of gentle *Paci-*

ficus, who, however, can be as angry as other mortals at having his cob-web ſyſtem broken and diſſipated only by exhibiting the projector in his proper habit. Who or what *Deiſidæmon* is, I am ignorant, but cannot, however, omit to congratulate him on his ſucceſs, which is ſufficiently ſhewn in this letter.

VI. Poor, unlucky *Pacificus!* that a fellow-labourer, the late Catholic Apologiſt, ſhould, thro' the groſſeſt ignorance, *betray* your *common cauſe*, when, under your ſuperior direction, it was in ſo hopeful a way; and before he had conſulted you how far *his* compromiſing ſcheme was conſiſtent with *your's*; what a pity that he had not the exquiſite talents of your favourite Catholic Author of *Foxes and Firebrands*, whoſe *machinations*, as you happily expreſs it, very probably *licenſed and encouraged* by Rome, ſo handſomely abuſed and pelted the Proteſtant Diſſenters, under the auſpicious patronage of Stuartine Politicians and Stuartine Divines, the predeceſſors of thoſe very Diſſenters, whom you are now amuſing, coaxing, and cajoling in ſo pretty, polite, and dexterous an aſſemblage of heterogeneous principles and images.

VII. But why in ſuch a paſſion with the *Confeſſional*, if you really and in good earneſt think that the plan of it wears full as popiſh a complexion as your's? Why invent ſcurrilous terms (mumping a *Helluo)* to abuſe an author who is, in your opinion, promoting the common cauſe? All I ſhall ſay for him, ignorant as I am of what paſſes in his heart, is, that, if ſuch was his view, it was very unfortunate for him that before he ſet about his work, he did not go to ſchool to learn of *Pacificus* a little more author-craft, or rather *Eccleſiaſtical Prudence*. For as far as I can ſee, he has

has ordered his plan ſo inartificially, that, were it to be executed, not only the body, but the very ſpirit of Popery would be driven out of the kingdom.

I beg pardon, Mr. Printer, for offering to take up ſo much of your paper. The reaſon why I offer it, is your openneſs to all parties; to which I will add, that tho' I ſometimes give you the trouble in this way, it is not often, a conſideration which I hope will entitle this letter to a place in your Ledger, as ſoon as you can conveniently make room for it.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

VERIDICUS.

LETTER XXXII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Aug. 31, 1768.

I. A Great exception taken to our eſtabliſhed church, is her directing in her Liturgy that the ſick perſon may be "moved to make a ſpecial confeſſion of his ſins, if he feel his conſcience troubled with any weighty matter," and that the prieſt ſhall abſolve him in this manner; "our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who has left power to his Church to abſolve all ſinners, who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive thee thine offences, and by his authority committed

mitted to me, I abſolve thee from all thy ſins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, amen." Here is, ſay they, not only a declarative or deprecative, but even as judicial and authoritative a ſentence, as was ever pronounced by popiſh prieſt.

But who does not ſee that the difference betwixt the neceſſity of confeſſion, that pick-lock to men's conſciences, mean ſupport of Rome's tyranny over them, and of her prieſt's importance, eſtabliſhed by the Council of Lateran (Can. 21.) and that of Trent (Ses. 14. can. 6.) on the one ſide, and the piece of advice here given on the other, is as wide as that betwixt demanding a man's purſe, and calling to him for alms?

II. Nor can it be ſaid the thing, even by way of counſel, is unjuſtifiable; as otherwiſe, a malefactor's pleading guilty would be ſo too, what no one, I preſume, will aſſert. Nor do I ſee the abſolution can be amiſs; for beſides its being given but to ſuch as humbly and heartily deſire it, the ſinner is not the leſs diſcharged from his guilt, even ſhould the abſolving power be a forgery, nor the prieſt more criminal whilſt there is a probability of its authenticneſs, which cannot be denied as well grounded as a phyſician's reliance upon the ſalubrity, or efficacy of his recipe, which, however ſlender, will, in caſe of its miſcarrying, yet bear him out guiltleſs.

III. But whether this be a counſel or command I leave to the diſcuſſion of controvertiſts, contenting myſelf with obſerving, from the effect of that abſolving power being put upon as precarious a footing, as Chriſt's always hearing ſuch as join in prayer, and his being ever in the midſt of ſuch as aſſemble in his name (Mat. xviii. 18.) its importance is ſo far from being ſo great as Papiſts imagine

imagine, that, as a prayer in one's cloſet may, for the generality, be preferable to that made in public (Mat. vi. 6.) ſo may the caſe be with a confeſſion to God alone, compared to that made in public, or even in the whiſpering auricular way; whence we may likewiſe conclude the little importance even of the abſolving faculty, when the exertion thereof muſt be blind without confeſſion, and that this ungrateful taſk, being left to every one's choice, would ſeldom, if ever, be performed.

IV. The next pretence is taken from the collect of St. Michael: "O everlaſting God, *&c.* mercifully grant, as thy holy angels always do thy ſervice in Heaven, ſo by thy appointment they may ſuccour and defend us on earth, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, amen." But who could imagine that to beg a favour of an underling, cap in hand, as is directed by the council of Trent (Ses. 25.) and apply to his maſter for geting him to lend a hand, as is here done, were the ſame thing? If that does not imply a kind of independency on God, it ſurely muſt a ſort of omniſcience or omnipreſence, as nothing leſs ſhould ſeem to ſuffice to the angel being privy to the numberleſs addreſſes made to him, perhaps, at the ſame time from ſo many different parts of the globe.

V. The next is taken from the prayer in the order for burying the dead: "Almighty God, &c. we give thee hearty thanks, &c. beſeeching thee that it may pleaſe thee of thy gracious goodneſs ſhortly, &c. to haſten thy kingdom, that we, with *all thoſe that are departed* in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect and conſummate bliſs both of body and ſoul in thy eternal and everlaſting glory, &c." Here, ſay they, depart-

ed

ed ſouls are prayed for: but this would be highly injurious to them if in Heaven, and unprofitable if in Hell, therefore a mid-place, be it called purgatory, or otherwiſe, muſt be here ſuppoſed. But who could lay any ſtreſs upon an inconſiderate expreſſion, put by way of concomittancy in the ablative, not nominative caſe, when compared to the 22d art. of religion, where it is expreſsly defined, that, "The Romiſh doctrine concerning purgatory, pardons, worſhipping and adoration, as well of images as relics, and alſo the invocation of ſaints, are fond things, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warrant of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the word of God."

Morever, as it is the bliſs both of body and ſoul, which cannot be expected until after the general reſurrection, that is here prayed for, who can pretend a deliverance from the pains of purgatory, which Papiſts ſuppoſe now extant, is any more meant hereby than by the ſecond petition in the Lord's prayer, *thy kingdom come?* A conſequence however no one that I know has ever pretended to deduce from thence.

VI. Another inſtance brought of this conformity, is the direction given to make the ſign of the croſs on the forehead of the newly baptiſed, "in token that hereafter they ſhall not be aſhamed to confeſs the faith of Chriſt crucified, that they ſhall manfully fight under his banner againſt ſin, the world, and the devil, and continue Chriſt's faithful ſoldiers and ſervants until their lives end."

But are theſe purpoſes the ſame as paying it a kind of idolatrous homage in that veneration and honour the ſecond council of Nice, and that of Trent, defined to be due to the relics and images of ſaints. Surely things, of their own nature indifferent

indifferent, are unwarrantable or laudable according to the ends they are made to ſerve.

VII. Some would make the continuing the faſt and abſtinence days in her calender an article of their impeachment, the more, as theſe are often the very days pitched upon for riot and feſtivity, in open violation of laws enacted even ſince the reformation for the inforcement of this duty, and as yet unrepealed.

But have we not ſeen ſhe obſerves the ſame conduct with reſpect to confeſſion, which yet few, if any, put in practice? may laws not become obſolete, or not binding, as well from diſuſe and uncontrouled infringements as formal repeals? May antiquarians not be choice of pagan antiquities without being inclined to paganiſm? Or is it fair to charge the eſtabliſhed church with a propenſity to a religious diſtinction of meats, when ſhe explodes works of ſupererogation as arrogant and impious (art. 14.)?

VIII. Theſe are the principal charges of her conformity with popery, I can at preſent recollect, made to the eſtabliſhed church, where I muſt expreſs my ſurpriſe, that her divines, inſtead of putting any favourable gloſs upon theſe paſſages, unleſs indeed we ſhould reckon barely denying the popiſh charge to be ſuch, not only copy after Papiſts herein, but even add other, they fancy, exceptionable ones of their own thereto, as we ſhall ſee, after having, as uſual, beſtowed a few remarks on Deiſidæmon's letter of June 16.

IX. In my laſt, Mr. Printer, I expreſſed a dread of not being fortunate enough to enjoy long ſo agreeably time-killing a companion: you will doubtleſs imagine now, that having pledged his word of honour, theſe fears muſt of courſe be removed: not at all, Sir, I no ſooner pluck up my

ſpirits

ſpirits upon this account, but they flag from the conſideration, that as two ſhips ſailing for a diſtant port, and meaning to keep in company the whole voyage, are ſeparated in a ſtorm, ſo as ſcarce to keep one another in ſight, the caſe is like to be ſo here: the windings of an argument are ſuch, that the line or thread ſet out upon is as hard to be ſteadily ſtuck to as the ſtrait Rhombus, or courſe of a ſhip in a boiſterous ſea. However, if he has performed the difficult taſk is left to the candour of his own brethren, after having firſt conſidered, with due maturity, the following remarks.

X. As he has already, without other ſhadow of proof than his bare word, made my views the ſame with thoſe of the Roman Catholic Apologiſt, and ſuch an enthuſiaſt as Joſeph Baretti, whoſe fanatical arguments for proſelyting Engliſh are, I fancy, a-kin to thoſe of the Quaker's, who ſome years ſince is ſaid to have undertaken a tour to Rome to convert the Pope; ſo does he here aſſimilate them to thoſe of father Davenport, who would explain the 39 articles in a Catholic ſenſe.

But pray does *dubbing* myſelf a defender thereof againſt the aſperſions of their being tainted with popery, imply as much as making them bear a Catholic ſenſe, or vindicating the real preſence? Sure none but ſuch as Deiſidæmon could have dreamt of ſo prepoſterous an inference.

XI. I ſhould be glad to know how the three points of information he ſays I have been deficient to my readers in, could, however true, have been to his purpoſe of overthrowing my plan. Queen Elizabeth ſtruck out of King Edward the VIth's articles a long paſſage againſt the real preſence, the latter part of the Church catechiſm was chiefly the work of one Bencraft, a biſhop of

not

not the beſt character, and under the direction of King James the Firſt, who was not ill-affected to popery, very many learned and pious Proteſtants cried aloud for a reformation of the Liturgy: therefore all my attempts for its vindication, as it now ſtands eſtabliſhed by law, from popery and its being unwarrantable, will prove ineffectual. God deliver us from ſuch logic! If peace was not my profeſſion, Mr. Printer, I ſhould give him as good as he brings and ſo ſend him packing with a flea in his ear: the expreſſion, I own, would need an apology, was it not ever allowable to ſpeak to folks in their own way.

XII. The feaſt of the aſs, not regarding me who have here diſclaimed even that of the croſs, he ſhould have propoſed to the Popiſh Apologiſt, who, it ſeems, is conceited enough in his abilities for entering the controverſial liſts. As to the *knock down* argument of the Popiſh miſſionaries, the only point of his letter I find to his purpoſe, I am willing to comply with the deſire he, however mockingly expreſſes for my helping a *poor Proteſtant* to the beſt anſwer, I am able, for ſtoping their mouths, by aſking them in my turn, if they can find no difference between the uſe of a thing upon ſolemn emergencies, and its proſtitution upon every trivial occaſion? Between our military men, for inſtance, being accoutred with every offenſive and defenſive weapon on the day of battle, and their to be always met with in profound peace armed cap-a-pee? Or is a king daily to wear his crown, for his having done ſo on his coronation? and really were we to diſcard whatever is made a handle of by Popiſh miſſionaries againſt us, goſpel liberty would ſtand but a bad chance. Do they not pretend that the growth of infidelity and ſchiſm in this land are the unhappy fruits

fruits thereof? though it is obvious not liberty, but its abuſe, licentiouſneſs, is what the miſchievous effect ſhould be aſcribed to.

XIII. In fine, whether my way of getting the catechiſtical phraſe reliſhed does not fall ſhort of getting the *round-wafer tranſubſtantion* ſwallowed (a general ſalve for all preſſing arguments) is ſubmitted to the impartial reader, to whom, from this time forwards, I appeal for the truth of ſuch *gratis dictums*, which I will paſs by without animadverſion, to proſecute my plan and bring it to a ſpeedier iſſue.

PACIFICUS.

LETTER XXXIII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Sept. 12, 1768.

I. TO find Papiſts, our natural enemies, ever carping at our church, even ſo far as to calumniate her, by giving out, for inſtance, that ſhe allows the marriage of firſt, not ſecond, couſins, whereas, in fact, ſhe forbids neither, is what we may expect in courſe; but that any branch of the Reformation ſhould, in this land eſpecially, ſo forget themſelves, as to join in the cry againſt her excellent conſtitution, one would ſcarce believe; as after the Toleration Act, it would ſeem the height of ingratitude, and aiming at no leſs than the ſetting themſelves up upon her ruins, in Nonconformiſts; and of hypocriſy, nay of impiety in Conformiſts, who, through the moſt abandoned caſuiſtry

caſuiſtry, ſubſcribe to what they in their ſouls condemn: however, that ſo it is will appear from the following reaſons, aſſigned for the reviſing and improving our Liturgy, which, however, I poſtpone 'till my next, to make room for a few remarks on *Veridicus's* letter of *July* 2.

II. This Gentleman was the firſt that appeared in this paper in oppoſition to my ſcheme, and that ſo long ago as the 20th of February laſt, from which time he, it ſeems, watched an opportunity of hitting it home, but if it be ſo favourable as he may imagine, the impartial, Mr. Printer, may judge. He complains that I ſet about ſhewing the catechiſtical expreſſion ſuſceptible of a ſenſe not papiſtical, by barely citing the arbitrary comments of ſome of our divines; whereas, in my letter of the 20th of May, he might ſee the contrary: to this I therefore refer, or, to ſave him the trouble, only aſk, may a perſon not verily and indeed take poſſeſſion of an eſtate by the delivery of a deed, or other emblematical ſign thereof to himſelf, or even attorney? and if ſo, why may our caſe not be ſimilar? the authority of our divines was therefore but a collateral proof.

III. Nor do I ſee, but that the ſentiments of ſuch of them, as bear the greateſt affinity to that of the *Lady upon Seven Hills*, herein, are as different from her's as a picture is from the man, whoſe it is; nor of courſe, how all my pretended attempts to make them coincide could be otherwiſe than idle; nor, in fine, how Chriſt could be excuſed from telling a lie, if what he held in his hands and gave his diſciples was neither really nor figuratively his body: ſo that I fancy Mr. Hales muſt have been ever memorable, more for his having been a ſufferer for righteouſneſs ſake, than his polemical talents, as nothing can be more

obvious than that the above inſtrument, which truly and properly is nothing elſe than a piece of written parchment, may verily and indeed convey an eſtate, if not in kind, at leaſt emblematically in words, or expreſſive thereof.

IV. But what ſurprizes here is, that, in oppoſition to his own ſentiment, viz. that the drift of my plan, as I always declared, without ever imagining the project either *fooliſh* or *impracticable*, unleſs perhaps in reſpect to ſuch as ſhut their eyes againſt conviction, was to reconcile Diſſenters to the doctrine and worſhip of our Church as they now ſtand; he congratulates *Deiſidæmon* upon his conjecture, unſupported by the moſt ſlender proof. This, indeed, he fancies to find in what I ſay of the Apologiſt and Confeſſional, as if I charged them in a pet with the want of *Author-craft* and *Eccleſiaſtical Prudence*, without conſidering that a perſon may reſent being compared to a wretched advocate even in an enemy's cauſe, and be as deſervedly *angry* at having a calumny affixed upon him as a well grounded charge, eſpecially when another perſon, though in appearance equally, I might ſay more, guilty, lies under no ſuſpicion.

V. Now, beſides other charges brought by the Confeſſional's anſwerer, does it not confeſſedly accuſe the eſtabliſhed clergy, either of ſupine ignorance or equivocation and perjury? and by diſproving ſubſcriptions and declarations, does it not open a gate for Papiſts entering the Proteſtant fold unnoticed? Let Veridicus tell how far this were like to do for eradicating the very *ſpirit* of Popery? Or if the epithet that gave him ſuch offence is ſo very ill adapted or *ſcurrilous?* Or if *generation of Vipers* (Mat. xxiii. 33.) *offſpring of the Devil* (John viii. 44.) &c. Titles which Chriſt be-

beſtowed on the Phariſees for obſtructing his plan, muſt be looked upon in the ſame light?

VI. To ſpeak the truth, Mr. Printer, as the *outs* are ever blaſting, not ſo much the Adminiſtration, as the private views, the perſonal or national character of the *ins*, for the ſake of rendering them odious in the eyes of an undiſcerning multitude, ſo does the caſe ſeem here: or was archbiſhop Laud not aſperſed with being popiſhly affected by doctor Abbot; judge Anderſon by one of the clergy; archbiſhop Wake by the Confeſſional, &c.? I go about juſtifying our church government, not in a vague, general, but, what ſeems to gall moſt, ſpecifical way, by minutely obviating every exception I find made thereto, which, if done with ſucceſs, muſt be owned a clincher; wherefore, right or wrong, my deſign muſt, without more ado, be papiſtical, though I am poſitive, were his *convertiſſeurs* to be judges, the ſentence would be quite the reverſe; nor do I think they would be herein diſabuſed more by what *Veridicus* calls my *commodious* affinity, than by his ſo ardently wiſhed-for reformation, which would afford them equally as good, nay a better handle of decoying away our vulgar Proteſtants, upon whom they are ſaid chiefly to practiſe; as, in caſe of its taking place, they might eaſily inſinuate, that it muſt be a rotten church conſtitution, which, for having been deviſed but about two centuries ſince, ſtands already in need of ſo much reparation; nor do I think *Veridicus* would find it an eaſier taſk to beat their duped proſelytes out of this fallacy, than out of the arguments taken from the pretended affinity aforeſaid.

PACIFICUS.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Sept. 17, 1768.

I. THE firſt reaſon aſſigned for reviſing the Liturgy is, to moderniſe ſome expreſſions, which, from the continual flux, all living languages are known to be in, muſt gradually become ſo obſolete, as, in the long run, to render the Engliſh ſervice as unintelligible to the vulgar, at leaſt, as the Romiſh. This has ſuch an air of plauſibility, that the Breviary and Miſſal, the liturgy of Papiſts, who are ſo ſcrupulouſly tenacious thereof, as if, like the Alcoran, they believed them ſent from Heaven, have, from time to time, undergone many amendments on the like account.

And indeed, a book, as Dr. Stanhope obſerves, be it never ſo intelligible, is never read with ſuch guſt in an antique dreſs. "The very conſiderable changes, ſays he, which have happened to many of our modern languages, and particularly the many improvements made in the Engliſh tongue within the laſt century, are a mighty prejudice, even to the moſt valuable things written before that time; no weight of matter, or beauty of thought is ſufficient to procure them that good acceptance, with the generality of readers, which they would not fail to find, if dreſſed in a more modiſh garb, and therefore the making ſuch writers ſpeak, as if they had lived and converſed with us at this day, whilſt the force and ſubſtance of what they ſay is preſerved entire, is ſo far from an injury,

injury, that I preſume it will be allowed a kindneſs, and an advantage."

II. To give a few inſtances of thoſe obſolete expreſſions to our preſent purpoſe. How odd would it not ſound to hear the book of canticles called at this day, the ſame as formerly, the *ballad of ballads*, that of wiſdom, that of *ſapience*, &c.? How do we think the following would be reliſhed from the pulpit? "Corſes, cracking, dankiſh, followingly, racknowledge, ſithe, ſithence, certes, eftſoon, payniſms, evangely, pointels, dizards, blinkards, ſtallards, daſtardly daws, cucking ſtool, *&c.*?" Yet this is the language of our Homilies, as are likewiſe thoſe coarſe applications, "loins girt about with the verity, ſhod with ſhoes of the goſpel, Lazarus, that pitiful (this epithet is beſtowed upon God himſelf in one of the occaſional collects of the liturgy) man, Chriſt, God's natural ſon, ſhew ourſelves to be ſweet-bread to God, *&c.*" as alſo this indelicate reprehenſion of a ſhewy Lady; "O! thou woman, not a Chriſtian, but worſe than a Payniſm, thou miniſter of the devil, why pampereſt thou that carrion fleſh ſo high, which ſometime doth ſtink on the earth as thou goeſt; however thou perfumeſt thyſelf, thy beaſtlineſs cannot be hidden, or overcome with thy ſmells and ſavours, *&c.*"

III. This reaſon I therefore freely ſubſcribe to; but not to the ſecond, viz. to facilitate the junction of timorous non-conforming ſcrupuliſts, unleſs with the following proviſos: 1. That the expediency of a common liturgy; and, 2. The indifferency of the alterations inſiſted on to be made in the preſent, ſhould be agreed to by them. What reliance could there be had upon the ſincerity of their union, ſhould they in their ſouls condemn all ſet forms of prayer? or look upon that

of our church to be but in one ſingle point ſubſtantially erroneous? We might as ſoon build upon the candour of their reconciliation with Rome. What ſecurity could they give, that, being of this opinion, they would not prefer ſome ſuch impeachment againſt never ſo thoroughly reformed a liturgy, as they do againſt the preſent, after having paſſed five reviews from the year 1548? A falſe ſtep is ſcarce ever ſo forgiven, as never to be thrown into one's diſh, as an argument of his not to be truſted ever after on a like occaſion.

IV. Now, that their ſentiments, as to both theſe and other points are, at leaſt ſuſpicious, appears from hence, that, though I do not find ſet forms expreſsly condemned by them, yet they have hitherto truſted to their temporary ones; that they cry aloud againſt eſſential miſtakes of the church ſervice, wherein the purpoſe of my plan is to ſhew, they are wrong, and eſpecially that I find a renowned Author of their perſuaſion ſuggeſting the impropriety of creeds making part of a liturgy in theſe words; "The act of worſhip is as much an evidence of our faith in God, as the repetitions of any creeds can be; and as creeds have nothing of the nature of prayer and praiſe in them, they are no fit part of any public devotion."

V. Theſe prejudices I would, therefore, have Diſſenters diveſted of before they can think of entering upon a treaty of Union with ſucceſs. As to the expediency of Set Forms, it is thus avowed by a worthy diſſenting miniſter in a letter to a friend, "I intirely agree with you, ſays he, that Forms ſhould be uſed in public worſhip, and that it is fit the people ſhould vocally join in the adoration and praiſes. There may be ſome few miniſters

niſters who ſtand in no need of a form; but the generality of us want ſuch aſſiſtance very much: for want of a form, prayer is oftentimes a painful thing, an exerciſe of the head only, without any motion of the heart or affections." And, indeed, I cannot ſee why a ſameneſs or unity of Form, ſhould not be of as much importance towards offering a holy violence to Heaven, as that of a place of worſhip.

VI. In regard to creeds; I own the act of worſhip may evidence our faith in regard to God; But is this enough? Are there not falſe worſhips of the Deity? And are they not grounded upon falſe creeds? Which then are the diſtinguiſhing characteriſticks of them, from the true, unleſs they be creeds? There were deceivers in St. John's time, (2 John. vii.) who were diſtinguiſhed by their not confeſſing Jeſus Chriſt was come in the fleſh, the only means of diſcovering them with any certainty, as they might have, like the Manicheans, joined in worſhip with the faithful: why then may the caſe not be ſo now? How could thoſe foxes and firebrands, already mentioned, be prevented from making the ſame havoc in a proteſtant fold, now as formerly, by introducing themſelves into the ſacred miniſtry, under various diſguiſes, unleſs by means of creeds? Or are theſe not the beſt teſts for diſtinguiſhing true religion from enthuſiaſm?

VII. It ſhould indeed, in general, ſeem ſufficient for the purpoſe of a nationally eſtabliſhed church, that a perſon profeſſed all that God has revealed in the ſcriptures; was it not that gloſſes put hereupon, may ſeem as wild to her as the inward light or ſecret immediate revelation, pretended to by the moſt arrant fanatics; now, tho' poſſibly theſe may warrantably upon an invincibly

erroneous perſuaſion abide thereby, yet it muſt be owned, ſhe has a right, when convinced of the illuſion, to keep ſuch out of her pale. In fine, if creeds muſt have no place in a liturgy, but thankſgiving and prayer muſt be implied by every part thereof, then neither the ten commandments, and but very few parts of ſcripture, muſt have admittance thereto, what, I preſume, nobody will pretend to ſay.

I am, Sir,

Your moſt humble Servant,

PACIFICUS.

LETTER XXXV.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Sept. 22, 1768.

I. THE third reaſon for reviſing the Liturgy, is to retrench ſome obſcure unſcriptural and leſs edifying things, and ſubſtitute others thereto: this is a plea of a country Curate in a letter printed in January, 1737, where he enumerates ſome incongruities, which he fancied made a reviſal then as neceſſary as that made in 1661, though, according to Dr. Tenniſon, the amendments and improvements made thereby amounted to 600.

His firſt objection is to the exhortation made to the ſponſors in baptiſm, from his having been called to baptiſe twin children, a poor travelling woman, a native of Guernſey, had been accidentally brought to-bed of the day before, and

to

to which ſome of the leaſt conſcientious of his pariſhioners were pitched upon to ſtand, who were likely never to ſee the babes again. " It is an egregious trifling, both with God and man, ſays he, to require of the ſponſors, or they to undertake in ſuch a caſe to call upon theſe children, to hear ſermons, to teach them the nature of the vow they had made for them, to provide for their inſtruction in the Creed, Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, *&c.*" to which he adds, a too much prevailing abuſe of poor people hiring ſponſors, at no ſmall expence, and with nothing leſs than a view to the childrens religious education. Why then, ſays he, is there not ſome proviſion made, either to rectify the abuſe, lay the ceremony aſide, or leave it at the diſcretion of the parents and parſon to obſerve it or not?

II. But is it reaſonable to exclaim againſt a ceremony for its being ſometimes abuſed, or here and there rendered uſeleſs for the intended ends? Muſt all oaths be aboliſhed becauſe ſome people perjure themſelves? Muſt Matrimony be ſo, as it may now and then happen, that, from the ſterility, incontinency, or frowardneſs of one or both the parties, neither of its three ends are anſwered? Is the ſponſor's engagement not to be underſtood with the proviſo, unleſs the child be out of my reach? or the pious parents, by their ſedulity, or otherwiſe, ſhould diſburthen me? Were the ſeconds, or godfathers, among the Romans, whence the uſe of ſponſors ſeems to have taken its riſe, to be laid aſide, becauſe the combatants could ſometimes do without them? Have I not already ſhewn, that indifferent formalities ſhould break no ſquares? Or, in fine, ſhould laws reſpecting them be ſlighted becauſe of contingencies, when all ſtatutes are known

known to relate to what is commonly apt to happen?

III. His next objection is to ſome paſſages taken from the Burial Office, which he thinks are hardly true, or, at the leaſt, but very improper; he quotes three, whereof the firſt is as followeth: "Almighty God, with whom do live the ſpirits of them that depart hence in the Lord, and with whom the ſouls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burthen of the fleſh are in joy and felicity." Beſides the tautology here implied, the general opinion of our divines (ſays he) makes the good ſouls go to Hades until the day of judgment; therefore, they are not with God, who is in Heaven.

But to be ſimply with God, and to be with him in joy and felicity are ſurely not ſynonimous, as appears by the fate of Enoch (Gen. v. 24.) where then is the tautology? Not to enter into the merits of that ſyſtem, which excludes ſouls from enjoying the beatific viſion till the day of judgment, or a thouſand years after, I only ſay, as to the other part of the objection, that, was the unanimous agreement, not only of all chriſtians, as Mr. Hales, Stillingfleet, and others, would have it; but of all the branches of the reformation alone requiſite for every part of a liturgy, the thing were ſcarce practicable, it is therefore enough, that the point be probable, as I obſerved to be the caſe with the abſolution. Now that it is ſo, ſeems to be clear from hence, that the penitent thief the day that he died was with Chriſt, who, I ſuppoſe was in joy and felicity, at leaſt when at his father's right-hand, whither therefore, St. Paul hoped to be transferred upon his diſſolution (Philip. i. 23.)

IV. The

IV. The ſecond is this, " We give thee hearty thanks, for that it hath pleaſed thee to deliver this our brother out of the miſeries of this ſinful world;" there may be ſome propriety, ſays he, in giving God thanks for the death of a very old, ſickly, or wretchedly poor man; but none at all that he can ſee, for that of a man in his prime, bringing up a family in virtue and induſtry, and doing eminent ſervices to his religon and country; for then a ſubmiſſion to God's wiſe providence, not thankfulneſs ſhould, he thinks, be expreſſed.

But this would ſuppoſe the comforts of this life, compared to what God has in ſtore for man in the next, are not real miſeries, and that its adverſities always are, which in God's eyes may be quite otherwiſe; why then, depending upon his ever having our advantage in view, ſhould we not indiſcriminately thank him for every exchange of this life for immortality? Or is ſubmitting to Providence without gratitude and thankfulneſs not making virtue of neceſſity?

V. The laſt is this, " Beſeeching thee, that it may pleaſe thee of thy gracious goodneſs ſhortly to accompliſh the number of thine elect, and to haſten thy kingdom;" whereof the meaning, tho' uncertain, muſt, he fancies, imply the doctrine of abſolute predeſtination; as if there was a determinate number of perſons to be ſaved, and that God can make it up ſooner or later, as he pleaſes. But, without attempting to ſound the unfathomable depths of God's preſcience and decrees, could he not have ſeen, that the ſame cavil might be raiſed, to explode this petition in the Lord's Prayer, *Thy Kingdom come*, equally purporting the accompliſhment of the number of the elect, if underſtood of God's kingdom after the day of judgment?

ment? Whether by *abſolute Predeſtination* he means that made independent of foreſeen deſerts, or that a determinate number, and neither more nor leſs, are to be ſaved; both, however inſcrutable, are yet, at leaſt, probable, which as we have repeatedly ſeen, is a fit ſubject for a liturgic prayer.

That popiſh prieſts ſhould reflect upon this burial ſervice, as an unmeaning piece, for not, I ſuppoſe, praying ſouls out of purgatory, is no matter of wonder; as they ever expreſs a diſlike to what does not bring griſt to the mill, but that any proteſtant ſhould, is amazing, unleſs they would make prayers, praiſes, and thankſgivings, to be inſignificant things.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

PACIFICUS.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Sept. 30, 1768.

I. ONE might have expected Mr. Pacificus would have been quiet, after he had ſeen expoſed to day-light his little lurking views of diſparaging the reformation, and varniſhing over his beloved Popery, the moſt ſordid and meaneſt of all ſuperſtitions, that puts its votaries upon worſhipping what goes into their belly, and making a God Almighty of it.

But the man has no front or ſhame. His end is ſtill the ſame, though his courſe be a little changed.—A fine advocate he indeed, for the church of England, who ſets up only to defend ſome of her popiſh leavings at the reformation, which

which all her true ſons have ever ſince earneſtly wiſhed, and endeavoured to get rid of.

II. Thus he ſets himſelf to defend the prayer called *Michael and all Angels*. Not that he has any great regard for angels, although he ſometimes compliments them with a ſhort ejaculation by the bye. But under their wings he longs, and hopes to bring in his beloved male and female ſaints of the Pope's making; St. Roche for the P**, St. Cornelia the falling evil, St. Apollin the tooth-ach, St. Nicholas for ſcholars, St. Luke for painters, St. Chriſtopher for ſailors, but above all, our Lady *Ave Maria Stella*, our Lady Mary, Queen of Heavens, all in all, diſpenſer of every thing to every ſuitor, who was doubtleſs a holy and good woman in her time, but is now as dead as a door-nail.

III. And when he has once brought his ſaint-worſhip to bear, then his image-worſhip will follow of courſe: and then their candle religion, burning taper, and incenſe, and offering up gold, and hanging up crutches and legs, and arms, and whole men and women of wax; and all to do honour to the ſaints and our lady: God Almighty is out of the queſtion; he leaves the world to be tutored and governed by journeymen of the Pope's making.

IV. At another time, our pious advocate bends all his forces to maintain the uſe of the ſign of the croſs in baptiſm: and I will anſwer for him that here he is heartily in earneſt. He works to bring more into vogue this charm of all ills, this ſaving remedy to mankind, as the Roman Pontifical calls it: he would have us uſe it morning, noon, and night, at meal-time, at bed-time, full and faſting, and fall down before every peice of croſs-timber we ſee: and this, to bring the whole

cart-

cart-loads of timber of our Saviour's Croſs into credit, which has never wrought one miracle among us, or cured any one of us of the gripes, ſince we became wicked heretics. *Great Pan* is dead, perhaps aſleep; and friend Pacificus labours to awake him, and ſet him up again.

V. In the laſt eſſay of the ſkill of our wooden man, i. e. September 22, he makes an opening, with repreſenting the blemiſhes of our public liturgy, as much more in number than they really are; and this with a malicious view of indiſpoſing us to the uſe of it, and recommending his favourite maſs-book. But I will whiſper one thing in his ear, that all the fault in our common-prayer book is, the foul ſmack and taint which it retains by having borrowed too much unwarily out of his maſs-book, and that it never will be quite well with it, till this ordure is all purged out of it.

VI. I paſs by his dirty wit upon the improper uſe of ſponſors in baptiſm, which ſometimes happens, but which might be prevented, if, which I know is a liberty ſometimes taken, the clergyman would baptize the infant without ſponſors, where ſuch offer, as never can be preſumed afterwards to pay the leaſt attention to the child's ſpiritual improvement. However, he widens the breach according to cuſtom, by his low nonſenſe about *indifferent formalities breaking no ſquares*.

But his laſt blow is againſt our burial-ſervice, which he ſeeks to expoſe by a fooliſh and ridiculous defence of ſome improprieties in the promiſcuous uſe of it over all men, the moſt profligate as well as the moſt virtuous; when at the ſame time, this honeſt church advocate knows, that all abſurdities would vaniſh, and it would be moſt unexceptionable, or rather, a very fine and ſuitable

able compoſition, if uſed only according to the original deſign of its compilers. But his purpoſe is anſwered, if he can but increaſe its ſeeming improprieties, and at any event hook in his popiſh prieſts, as reflecting upon it, as an unmeaning piece, for not praying ſouls out of purgatory: but however, before he opens his ſhop for purgatory, he will do well to inform us how its fire and flame is to refine mens ſouls, which are not matter, ſince it is allowed their bodies lie rotting in the grave.

VII. I have now done with our man for the preſent, ſave one parting word of advice. Let him be quiet for the future, and I will give him my full abſolution, which will be more worth to him than the Holy Father's. His views of inflaming Proteſtants againſt each other, on account of their diviſions, in themſelves innocent, indifferent, and unavoidable, are fully ſeen through and diſcovered. His pitiful endeavours to defend our church by a falſe and ſhallow defence of it, I have fairly proved upon him. We want not his tinkering; let him mend his own dirty kettle of Popery, which has begun ſorely to leak, ſince her grand artificers, the Jeſuits, have been put out of their trade, and honeſt old *Clement* has been left in the lurch and deſerted, nay, and pillaged too, by ſome of his chief allies.

I am, Sir,

Your moſt obedient Servant,

DEISIDÆMON.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Oct. 4, 1768.

Richmond, Sept. 29.

I. IT is well known to thoſe who have turned their obſervations that way, that the grand ſcheme of our Engliſh Papiſts, moſt of whom are under the direction of the Jeſuits, is to effect, if poſſible, an irreconcileable diviſion between the Proteſtants of the eſtabliſhed church, and the Proteſtant Diſſenters from it. Wicked and fooliſh as this project may be thought, by the cool and impartial of both denominations, there are individuals of both ſorts, who have fallen into the trap, and ſome churchmen particularly are now well known to be as eager to ſow the diſſenſion as the Papiſts themſelves. It is of very little conſequence whether Pacificus is a Papiſt or a Laudæan Churchman. He is manifeſtly retained in the cauſe of the *Boutefeus*, and though a moſt miſerable hand, may probably find readers whom his nonſenſe may ſuit, and who will be enraged at the Diſſenters, for not being convinced with his reaſoning.

II. In your *Ledger* for September 22, he undertakes the defence of ſponſors in baptiſm, againſt the ſenſible and inſuperable objections of a Country Curate, who ſhewed, in 1737, the great incongruity of the general neglect of the engagement, with the ſolemnity of undertaking it, common to every one who offers himſelf or herſelf as a ſurety for the baptized infant or adult. This neglect our peace-maker conſiders, as " a *caſual abuſe*, which ought not to ſuperſede the uſe of the ceremony;" when it is ſo notorious, that if there is one ſponſor

ſor in five hundred, who take care of the religious education of the child for whom he or ſhe makes the *ſolemn vow, promiſe, and profeſſion*, it is as much as can be expected, conſidering the ſort of perſons who are pitched upon for this office, and the motives for pitching upon them. Among other fooliſh queſtions he aſks, " Is not the ſponſor's engagement to be underſtood with a proviſo, Unleſs the child be out of my reach?" Which puts me in mind of a droll fellow, who being aſked, by the miniſter, *Wilt thou be baptized in the faith?* anſwered, *Yes, if ever I am baptiſed again.*

III. He then talks of the inſtitution of ſponſors taking its riſe from the ſeconds appointed among the Roman combatants. Could he have made the church of England more odious, or more ridiculous to ſerious Chriſtians, than by deriving her rites and ordinances from the barbarous and prophane cuſtoms of Paganiſm? And can this man pretend to put himſelf upon us for a Proteſtant of that church? " Have I not already ſhewn, ſays he, that indifferent formalities ſhould break no ſquares?" So then this moſt ſolemn ſtipulation on the part of the ſponſor, and made before a congregation of chriſtians, and attended with pious ſupplications to God, relative to the ſolemnity, turns out at length an *indifferent formality!* He had juſt before compared the abuſes of this ſponſorſhip, to the abuſes of the matrimonial engagement. Is that engagement, then, a mere indifferent formality? Why not, if a papal diſpenſation intervene? In that caſe, I dare ſay, the ſolemn engagement of the parties would *break no ſquares* with the gentle Pacificus.

IV. In the next objection to an expreſſion in the burial-office, the country Curate hath led the

poor man out of his depth; for it ſeems, according to Pacificus, it is poſſible to be *ſimply* with God, without being with him in joy and felicity; and for this he refers us to the caſe of Enoch. But who told him that Enoch is *not* with God in joy and felicity? However, after ſome impenetrable nonſenſe about all *the branches of the reformation alone requiſite for every part of a Liturgy*, he flies to the doctrine of *probability*, as he did before in the caſe of abſolution, and thereby plainly points out the ſchool where he learned his diſtinctions, and his healing expedients.

V. In his anſwer to the Curate's next objection, he talks in the ſtyle of madam Bourignon, and other popiſh myſtics, and tells us, that the comforts of this life, compared to the felicities of the next, are *real miſeries*. And after all, what is this to the objection, viz. The *impropriety of thanking God* for taking away a virtuous and induſtrious member of ſociety, oftentimes the ſtay and ſupport of a feeble, helpleſs, and uneducated family, expoſed to poverty and numberleſs temptations by the loſs of an excellent parent, &c.? In what way will Pacificus apply his divinity to this caſe, but upon the ſuppoſition that every man who is taken away from the *comfortable miſeries* of this ſinful world, is ſure of the felicities of a better?

VI. In the concluſion of this marvellous anſwer, he ſays, that to pray for the accompliſhment of the elect, is equivalent to the petition, *thy kingdom come*, in the Lord's Prayer; but indeed, warily adds, "If underſtood of God's kingdom after the day of judgment." But if not, how then? Why then, the point muſt be given up to the country Curate, for Pacificus is at the end of his line.

VII. Whether

VII. Whether his deſign may not be at the bottom to expoſe the church of England to the deriſion of the Diſſenters, might admit of a doubt, if one could ſuppoſe ſo dull a writer to be a ſchemer. He may probably be a well-meaning tool, in the hands of ſome jeſuit in diſguiſe, who muſt enjoy the labours of his workman, with great exultation and ſecret tranſport, when he obſerves him puzzling about the *probability* of a conditional ſenſe, in a poſitive and peremptory abſolution, and abuſing ſome of the moſt able and excellent divines of the church of England, for not agreeing with ſome of their brethren, who have in vain endeavoured to acquit a certain anſwer in the church catechiſm of the charge of teaching tranſubſtantiation. This was one of his lateſt exploits, performed in doleful dumps, that he ſhould be ſo miſerably foiled, in ſo capital a caſe. It is indeed, Mr. Ledger, rather reſpect to your paper, than to my own eaſe, that prevents my following him through every exhibition of his jargon. There is no end of thoſe ſcribblers, who know not when they are confuted. There is no doubt, but ſo long as you will admit him, ſo long he will continue to write; but I will not promiſe to continue ſo long to read him. But as I ſee the Ledger conſtantly, I ſhall certainly give him a touch now and then, in hopes that you will indulge me in a privilege, which my adverſary equally enjoys, and of which I ſhall certainly make a more moderate uſe.

I am, &c.

VERIDICUS.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Oct. 11, 1768.

I. THE Author of the Confeſſional, (p. 359.) makes the following paſſage in the Athanaſian Creed, "the Unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in Unity ought to be worſhipped" inconſiſtent with the three diſtinct invocations of the three perſons in the Litany; but has Chriſt not made man and wife one in the ſame fleſh? yet they are two diſtinct perſons, who may be ſeverally ſued to for a favour; may the caſe not be ſo here? or may we not ſeverally and without contradiction, pray to Chriſt as God and as man; though in him we allow an unity of perſon, in a duality, if I may ſay ſo, of natures, and contrariwiſe?

II. As to the myſtery itſelf, ſo ſhocking is it reckoned now-a-days, to common ſenſe and reaſon, that we are aſſured from good hands, ſome modern geniuſes are more charmed with a late poetical eſſay, written in deriſion of it, after the ninety-ninth reading, than after the firſt; that our great Tillotſon wiſhed the church of England, for ſo highly laughable and glaring an abſurdity, fairly rid of the Athanaſian creed; that the inactivity of the Convocation, for ſome years, is owing to ſome of its members having ſcandalouſly libelled it, in ſpight of repeated and warm remonſtrances from the very throne; and that it is thought the principal cauſe of the non-conforming heart-burnings, notwithſtanding the diſgraceful brand

brand of inconſiſtency thereby ſtamped upon their ſect. John Calvin, the founder of Preſbytery, got Michael Servetus put to death for being an Antitrinitarian; though to his ſhame be it ſaid, he, in a letter to *Lælius Socinus*, reckoned the point of no importance; "if you chuſe, ſays he, to ſoar amidſt ſuch lofty ſpeculations, ſuffer me, an humble diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt, to meditate upon ſuch things as conduce to my *edification*;" his rigid followers, the Gomarites have ſtigmatized Epiſcopius, and other Arminians, with the odious epithet of Socinians; nay Melancton ſent to the Senate of Venice to beware of the impious error of Paulus Samoſatenus revived by Servetus; who can, therefore, depend that the next non-conforming generation will not bring Deiſm, or even Atheiſm, upon the carpet? or when, or where, if ever, their reformation, if liſtened to, would end?

I.I. But, whatever it may be with other non-conforming branches, whereof there are many, ſure I am, the diſſenting congregation of Dublin, from the cruel perſecution raiſed on this ſcore by his brethren againſt Mr. Emlyn, inſomuch that he confeſſes, "if the proceſs upon the writ, *de heretico comburendo*, had not been happily taken away in Ireland about ſeven or eight years before, he probably muſt have been put to the fiery trial," appear to have been rigid orthodox trinitarians. Biddle, the Socinian, dreaded more the Preſbyterians, in Cromwell's reign, than he did the members of the eſtabliſhed church, and the general aſſembly of Edinburgh, in their ſhorter catechiſm put out in 1751, eſtabliſhed more than one perſon in God by the following, beſides other more expreſs words, in anſwer to the queſtion, Who is the Redeemer of God's Elect? "The

only Redeemer of God's Elect, ſay they, is the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who being the eternal Son (this ſuppoſes a father) of God, became man, and ſo was and continueth to be God and man in two diſtinct natures and one perſon for ever." It is therefore incumbent on them to obviate the ridicule into which infidelity would turn this myſtery, by ſhewing it is poſſible the Father and Son, although the ſame identical thing with the divine nature, could, notwithſtanding the received maxim, "things the ſame with a third are ſo with one another," be diſtinct perſons, ſo as that the one, not the other, might be the Redeemer of the Elect, which I fancy might be done, in ſome meaſure, not only by ſolving the objections made thereto, but by the example of two natures in Chriſt, where human affections, ſuch as to be crucified, are attributed to his perſon, not divinity; although the ſame individual thing withal, and by ſeveral others of ſporting nature, which I ſhould mention, to adumbrate the thing, was it not that I apprehend expoſing ſuch ſacred topics to the taunts of ever ſcoffing blaſphemous waggs.

IV. Nor indeed can I reckon them better than infidels, who would refuſe their aſſent to ſuch points as they found not to ſquare with their natural notions of things, however atteſted by divine authority: had we no other voucher than the ſacred records for the eſtabliſhment of ſome of God's attributes, however ſurpaſſing the reach of our natural underſtanding, it ſhould ſeem alone ſufficient. How could we have any conception of his Ubiquity, for inſtance, or immenſity, or which is the ſame thing, his being whole in every part of the Univerſe, without imagining him to be at the ſame time below and above, before and behind, within and without himſelf, which appear

at

at leaſt a-kin to real contradictions? and yet Lord Bolingbroke, who boggles at God's moral, makes no doubt of his phyſical attributes, whereof his omnipreſence is one: why, therefore, ſhould we ſtartle at the apparent implicancy of the identity of three perſons with the divinity, though diſtinct from one another? and yet that ſo it is the ſcripture declareth.

V. To wave other proofs hereof, Chriſt ſpeaking of the Father to his diſciples ſays, I aſcend to my *God* and yours, (John. xx. 17.) the word, made fleſh, was *God* (John. i. 1.) and Ananias, for having lyed to the Holy Ghoſt, is reproached with having done ſo; not to men, but unto *God*, (Acts v. 4.) The divinity is therefore common to all three; and, of courſe, each is God: now that the ſon is diſtinct from the father, appears from hence; that Chriſt, to ſhew the weight of his own evidence, and that of his father, in favour of his Meſſiahſhip, lays the ſtreſs upon their being *two*; (John viii. 17.) and that he is ſo from the Holy Ghoſt is plain from hence; that he himſelf is to ſend the ſpirit, who proceedeth from the father; (John. xv. 26.) whence likewiſe the diſtinction from the father is evident, as nothing could properly ſend or proceed from itſelf: three perſons in one nature, and one nature in three perſons, is therefore a ſcripture doctrine.

VI. Nor do I ſee any greater impoſſibility in the fecundity of ſome of the father's divine attributes towards effecting both theſe emanations, than in ſpeaking into being the whole ſyſtem of the world by but a few *fiats*. However, it is not from any light nature can afford ſo much, as from the bare veracity of him, who, incompaſſed with unapproachable luſtre (1 Tim. vi. 18.) has

yet, by his gracious word, vouchſafed to proportion its reſplendent rays to the faint and eaſily dazzled ſight of mortals, that I would have this myſtery traced; and this may ſuffice to ſhew the reaſonableneſs of its belief.

To pretend with the Socinians, that the name of God is given to the Son and Holy Ghoſt only, as a deputed title, which inveſts them indeed with an abſolute ſovereignty over all created beings, and renders them objects of worſhip to men and angels; but not with true attributes of the Deity; to pretend this, I ſay, would be giving a handle to the Atheiſt, of ſaying ſomething like it, of the father himſelf, and, with as much reaſon; the ſaid reſtriction not affecting them in ſcripture any more than him. Is he not there deſcribed as corporal, mutable, iraſcible, and ſo cruel as to have been thought by ſome a bad genius? Might he not ſay, the true God, if there be ſuch, from his nature being ineffable, has never been once mentioned therein?

I am, Sir,

Your humble ſervant,

PACIFICUS.

LET-

LETTER XXXVII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Oct. 26, 1768.

I. WHAT appears moſt incomprehenſible in the doctrine of the Trinity is, that each perſon is God, and that all three are but one God; as if three were but one, and one were three: this is one of the capital ſcruples of a late pamphleteer, who calls himſelf a *Livery Servant*, meaning, I ſuppoſe, (in the illumined ſtile) of the *Lord Jeſus*, and boaſts his challenge given the world, to prove the doctrine of the Trinity Scriptural has been hitherto unanſwered.

His manner of heaping text upon text, without properly digeſting any, ſhews him a follower of Mr. Whiſton, who, in his letter to the Earl of Nottingham, " Begs leave to wave the common method of diſputing, and arguing, and pleading, and drawing uncertain conſequences, and to ſet down, inſtead thereof, a collection of the original texts and teſtimonies relating to the important doctrine of the Trinity in debate;" and this the rather, as his lordſhip muſt have known " the truth is beſt diſcovered by the open, fair, and ſolemn way of proceedings in courts of juſtice, where the evidence for facts is inquired into, and examined from ear and eye-witneſſes, or from authentic records produced in court, where the judges determine of thoſe facts entirely by that original evidence, and where all the pleaders alledge about thoſe facts goes for nothing any further

ther than it is thus proved:" without conſidering, that as in courts witneſſes are examined and croſs-queſtioned for the detection of falſe depoſitions, from ſubornation or otherwiſe, and records are canvaſſed for coming at their genuineneſs and true meaning or ſpirit; ſo it ſhould be here, and that he himſelf uſes the ſame ſubtleties and ſubterfuges which he condemns in the ſchoolmen, as appears by his diſtinction of the *actual* or phyſical eternity, from the metaphyſical or potential of the Son. And indeed, were we to abide by the bare unſifted depoſition of evidences, or words of a record, the innocent and chaſte Suſannah had not eſcaped with her life (Dan. xiii. 48.) and the popiſh tenet of Chriſt's real preſence, by his having ſaid, *This is my body*, would be byond all doubt; or may ſentences not bear a double meaning, as here, every lady in this land hath twenty nails on each hand, five and twenty on hands and feet, and this is true without deceit?

II. But to return to the incomprehenſibleneſs of this myſtery: beſides the duty of aſſenting to never ſo unſearchable *arcana*, if revealed, is it not poſſible the ſame individual ſoul may inform three human bodies at a time? and if ſo, would each compound, as conſiſting of a body and a ſoul, not make one man? and, conſidering there is but one ſoul in all, would all three make any more than one complete man? here then, in ſome meaſure, is ſketched the myſtery of one being three, and three being but one. Thus it is, that as the ſoul here cannot be ſaid to be beheaded, for inſtance, though one of the bodies without the others, and even the man may; ſo, though it cannot be ſaid that the Divinity in Chriſt has ſuffered, yet it may, that the humanity, the Son without

without the Father and Holy Ghoſt, and even God have ſuffered. Hence likewiſe it is, that the Holy Ghoſt may be God, although it be ſaid in ſcripture that he was ſent by God (Nehem. ix. 20. John xvi. 7.) received his commiſſion and inſtructions from God (John xvi. 13, 14.) and was the gift of God; (Acts viii. 20.) becauſe any of thoſe men may be properly man, and yet endued with ſimilar derogatory attributes in reſpect of the others. For let us ſuppoſe one of theſe men, in the firſt inſtant of his being, to beget the other by the communication of a diſtinct body, but of the ſelf-ſame ſoul, might all the phraſes of ſcripture, alledged to undeify the holy ſpirit, ſuch as the above, not be applicable to the latter, though ſtill a man as well as the former? and thus Mr. Biddle, the ill-fated harbinger of Whiſton is anſwered. His concluſion from a ſpirit changing place (Luke iii. 22. and John i. 32.) would be equally againſt Jehovah (Gen. xi. 5.) and that from his praying Chriſt to come to judgment (Rev. xxii. 17.) is likewiſe ineffectual, as one of the above men may give a like invitation to the other, and remain ſtill man. As to the ſpirit having an underſtanding (John xvi. 13, &c.) and a will (Rom. viii. 26, &c.) diſtinct from thoſe of God, the texts only imply the perfect harmony of the ſpirit's operations with the divine, whether proceeding from different principles or not, and at moſt that the two perſons there ſpoke of are diſtinct. In fine, as to ſome of the diſciples not knowing there was ſuch a thing as the Holy Ghoſt (Acts xix. 2.) it is no more than that one of the above men may be known without the other, though both be truly men. And ſhould it be aſked, how one individual ſoul could be in different bodies? I anſwer, the ſame as it now ſees in the eye, ſmells in the noſe, taſtes

in

in the palate, hears in the ear, ſings in the throat, dances in the feet, &c.

III. It is objected beſides by our Liveryman to the Son being God, that he is ſaid to be begotten, whence he could not be independent and ſelf-exiſtent, which, however, are indiſpenſible attributes of the Deity: and this he may ſay is the difference betwixt a trinity in God and the above men; whereof one may depend upon the other. But he ſhould have conſidered, that to be neceſſarily begotten of a neceſſary Being, is equivalent to being independent and ſelf-exiſtent. Is an earthly child beholden to his father for an intailed eſtate? Should he reply, that ſome primitive fathers call the Son and Holy Ghoſt's origin *voluntary*; I anſwer, it may be ſo, in as much as *voluntary* excludes co-action or conſtraint, but not neceſſity, whereby God the Father might be tied down to the exertion of his generating powers. Nor do I ſee any other end his, in every ſenſe, voluntary production of the Son could anſwer towards creating the world, or other purpoſe, than a carpenter's getting a cheſt of tools made for building a houſe; which were highly degrading his omnipotence, as it would ſeem to imply a dependance upon a medium to work by. And ſhould it be ſaid as yet, that the commiſſion given the Son by the Father to take fleſh, &c. was voluntary, and denoted him to have been under command, a thing impoſſible, had he been God: I anſwer, there can be no command where the will and power are the ſame, unleſs as one may be ſaid to be under his own command.

But ſhould this not ſatisfy him, if he honours my letters with his animadverſions in a decent and pacific way, he may depend upon my beſt endeavours towards diſcovering where the miſtake lies, mean while, would offer my thoughts upon the reſt of what he calls his *third attempt*, levelled at other

other articles of our church, was it not that he attacks the moſt common tenets of chriſtianity, and that in a ſcurrilous ſtrain; witneſs his calling Chriſt's deſcent into Hell, his *going to the Devil*, the proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt from the Father and Son, *a greater curioſity than any in the Britiſh Muſeum, &c.* whereas my only view is to arbitrate matters betwixt ſome of its members, and eſpecially as I entertain hopes of his accepting this my invitation.

IV. As to the damnatory clauſes of the Athanaſian creed, which partly deterred the great Chillingworth from ſubſcribing, unleſs as a means of union and peace, without yielding aſſent thereto; it ſhould be either proved, ſome point of that creed is unſcriptural, or that Paul was wrong in ſo often pronouncing damnation, againſt ſuch as taught otherwiſe than he preached (Gal. i. 8.). And as to this Gentleman's other ſcruple, to wit, that by ſubſcribing he would tye himſelf down to the obſervance of the Jewiſh Sabbath, it is ſtrange he could have entertained ſuch, when the 13th canon of the Church expreſsly declares, by the Lord's day to be kept holy, is meant, that commonly called Sunday.

V. But, to return to the ſaid clauſes, I fancy they need affect but the belief of the three perſons; not that of the minute and circumſtantial account given there of them; to mention but the proceſſions of the ſecond and third, what warrant of ſcripture can be produced, "That the ſon is of the father alone, not made nor created, but begotten? and that the Holy Ghoſt is of the Father and Son, neither made nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding?" Or who could form but a tolerable notion of ſuch niceties? innaſcibility, circuminceſſion, notion, relation, ſpiration, eſſence,

eſſence, and ſuch technical barbariſms of the ſchools, will never enable us even to glance upon the keen diſtinction betwixt begotten and proceeding; this, however, ſhould be no reaſon for withholding my aſſent, was the ſcripture but expreſs herein, which ſeems to me not to be the caſe: whence I think the eighth article of religion inſinuating the contrary, is to be underſtood in my ſenſe. However, I am ready to retract upon conviction, mean while I muſt obſerve the wide difference there is between a thing's ſubſtance and mode, its being and manner of being, and that the one may be known by revelation or otherwiſe, without the other. Thus God's immenſity, or omnipreſence, is an undoubted truth: yet how he is ſo may be no more conceivable than the nature of thoſe ineffable joys he has in reſerve for ſuch as love him here (1 Cor. ii. 9.).

VI. Nor do I ſee what, in reaſon, can be objected hereto, unleſs it be that the above article and clauſes enjoin the belief of ſaid Creed, without diſtinguiſhing ſubſtance from mode, which can be of no weight, as the nature of things determines, what part thereof is to be believed, on pain of damnation, and what not. Chriſt ſeems to make no difference between loving one's enemy, (Mat. v. 44.) and letting go the cloak when ſued for the coat; (Ver. 40.) yet nobody will ſay they are equally binding; nor is it uncommon that indefinite, nay general, prepoſitions ſhould have their exceptions. If Chriſt is not to be compriſed in the general aſſertion, that all men have ſinned in one (Rom. v. 2.) why ſhould theſe curious points fall under the damnatory clauſes, and not be looked upon in the ſame light, what many of our beſt divines pretend, as we do on a good ſermon, which being but an illuſtration of a ſcriptural

tural text, needs not, however, perhaps, true, in every point be believed on ſuch peril? So that, upon the whole, this creed may be let ſtand, at leaſt by giving people to underſtand the damnatory clauſes affect but ſuch as deny three perſons in one God, the ſecond to have taken fleſh, was crucified, died, and was buried, roſe again, went into Heaven, whence he is to come to judge all mankind, &c. what I apprehend no ſound Proteſtant will do.

VII. Though I might be excuſed from taking any notice of Deiſidæmon's letter of the 30th ult. after having ſo often warned him, I ſhould lend the deaf ear to all unſupported papiſtical impeachments, whereof it is ſolely replete; yet I muſt expreſs my ſurpriſe, how he could adviſe me to be *quiet for the future*, without in the leaſt ſignifying his deſire of ſilencing the authors of thoſe clouds of pamphlets now circulating againſt our Liturgy, Articles, Homilies, Canons, and above all the ſubſcriptions, declarations, and other qualifications, required by our conſtitution for the ſacred miniſtry, as no one ſhould in juſtice allow of an attack without a liberty of defence.

Could I be made ſenſible, that, I make to be of a nature to *inflame Proteſtants againſt one another, on account of indifferent and unavoidable* (*Query*, whether theſe epithets hang well together?) *diviſions*, I ſhould readily aſk the public's pardon, and for ever deſert my however favourite plan. Now, I flatter myſelf with a conſciouſneſs, of never having been actuated with ſuch baſe views, and with the full perſuaſion that no impartial judge will ever fairly infer from my letters, however bare-facedly miſrepreſented in many inſtances, that I mean to juſtify a *croſs-worſhipping, as dead as a door nail Saint-invocating or God-eating* religion,

but

but merely to vindicate our church from ſuch abſurdities; nor do I ſee why my plan ſhould be reckoned more inflamatory, than that of thoſe who cry aloud for a reviſal of our Church-ſervice.

VIII. Now could he really imagine his readers ſo void of diſcernment, as to confound the ſaid juſtification and vindication the one with the other? as to take it upon his bare word, the former may be fairly concluded from the latter? muſt a lawyer, who pleads to clear his client from the heinous charge of high treaſon, be himſelf a reputed traitor? if ſo, all ſuppoſed felons muſt die defenceleſs; and this, if I miſtake not, is the plight he would have our eſtabliſhed church reduced to, forlorn, like her maſter, and friendleſsly crucified betwixt two thieves, infidelity and enthuſiaſm, which Heaven forbid ſhould ever be her fate.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient ſervant,

PACIFICUS.

P. S. This, Mr. Printer, is the laſt letter I intend troubling you with in ſupport of our church and our mode of worſhip, unleſs your correſpondents furniſh me with freſh matter; my next eſſay will relate to the other branch of my plan mentioned in my firſt, which I will enter upon after having pointed to ſome things I think deſerving a reformation, made ſome remarks on Veridicus, and told Iſaac Harman in this place, that his argument againſt the Trinity, taken from no mention being made thereof to the Epheſians, to whom, however, Paul ſays he had declared all the counſel of God, (Acts xx. 27.) is unconcluſive; as the immortality of the ſoul, a ſtate of future retributions, and many more fundamental points of chriſtianity, ſhould for the ſame reaſon be exploded.

From

From the Ledger of the 14th November, 1768.

Ignotus *has our thanks for his kind advice: but in a public paper, like ours, which acts upon principles of the greateſt impartiality, public ſubjects muſt be freely diſcuſſed, and what may give him diſpleaſure, may afford much ſatisfaction to many of our readers.*

To the Printer of the Ledger, January 7, 1769.

AFTER near three months ſilence, I hope it will not be taken amiſs, that I inquire what hopes *Pacificus* may have of ſeeing his laſt letter, whereof you acknowledged the receipt the latter end of laſt October, inſerted; if electioneering, and the lottery ſtood in its way, the cauſe is now removed; but if of your own motion, or, what I am inclined to apprehend, influenced by his opponents, you mean thus to diſmiſs him, I preſume you will allow, it is but fair to comply with the previous warning he requeſted in ſaid letter. Your letting him know what he has to truſt to, will much oblige

MEANWELL.

P. S. There is but one letter remaining on the ſubject of our church conſtitution, the next eſſay will be chiefly upon a general comprehenſion of all Proteſtants, and, of courſe, the aboliſhment of ſome preſent religious teſts, for the enjoyment both of civil and eccleſiaſtical offices, where his hitherto antagoniſts may poſſibly become his auxiliaries.

ANSWER. *January 14, 1769.*

A frequent correſpondent muſt excuſe our refuſing to inſert any thing further in relation to a certain important cauſe, and we are ſorry for the inadvertence even in publiſhing his firſt letter, as the matter, we have juſt heard, is ſhortly to undergo a ſolemn examination.

To the Printer of the Ledger, January 16, 1769.

PACIFICUS begs to know if by the *Frequent Correſpondent* in laſt Saturday's Ledger, you mean him? and if ſo, whether there may not ſtill be ſome hopes of obtaining the inſertion of his laſt letter? he humbly conceives, a *ſolemn examination* far from being an obſtacle, ſhould rather be an inducement thereto, being as conducive to clear up the merits of the *important cauſe*, as the pleadings in court previous to the ſentence. Be that as it may, your determination will be his rule, and, when ſignify'd, will much oblige

MEANWELL.

P. S. 'Tis hard, after having religiouſly obſerved every term hitherto propoſed, he ſhould be refuſed this ſingle favour, eſpecially when he pledges his word it will be the laſt, even were his opponents to be indulged never ſo long.

ANSWER. *January* 20, 1769.

Our kind correſpondent Meanwell *ſhall be obliged next week, if poſſible, and nothing but the amazing number of pieces depending upon time, could occaſion ſo long a procraſtination.*

LET-

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Feb. 6, 1769.

I. THERE are many exceptions made by the *Diſquiſitors* and others, to the eſtabliſhed mode of worſhip in this kingdom: ſuch, for inſtance, as the want of a new tranſlation of the Bible, with ſhort notes and better diviſions, the too great length of the Liturgy, repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, and *gloria patri*, the impropriety of the communion office without communion, of the litany and churching of women, as they now ſtand, &c. but theſe are trifling objects: more worthy the conſideration of *Ritualiſts* than Divines in convocation aſſembled. However I ſhould undertake their defence, could I expect a more rational and pertinent reply, than that of the *able Deiſidæmon*, or his adulator *Veridicus*, to my remarks. The Diſquiſitors complain beſides of the clergy being obliged to believe the orthodoxy, not only of the Liturgy, Ordinal and Thirty-nine Articles, but even that of the ſecond book of Homilies, by their ſubſcribing to the thirty-fifth Article, without ſhewing, ſo far as I could have obſerved, the heterodoxy of its contents. However, ſhould be glad to be made ſenſible of any overſight I might have made herein, eſpecially as it is from ſuch imputations I undertake their vindication; not from every trivial incongruity in point of formality: for as to this, I am entirely of opinion with that great pattern of

moderation and prudence, *Melanction*, who concerning things indifferent, adviſed not to contend ſcrupulouſly about them, provided they had nothing of idolatry, and even to bear hardſhips, if it could be done without impiety; whereas *Illiricus* cried out, his followers would deſert all the churches, and threaten an inſurrection rather than bear even a ſurplice, which made *Melchiar Adam* compare him to the Jeſuit who would not have one wax taper put out, though it were to convert all the Hugonots, which is likely to be the caſe with Rome at this day, in regard to her tenaciouſneſs of her Latin maſs, of one kind, and other ſuch indifferent obſervances.

II. The only things of this nature I would have inſiſted upon are, firſt, the perfectly equal diſtribution of church livings, unleſs age, infirmity, certain incumbrances or obſtacles to the improvement or exertion of talents, required ſome little inequality. I would by no means have temporalities made incentives to the diſcharge of duty, which perhaps were as well left undone, as to have it tainted with ſelfiſhneſs. It is a ſtrong ſymptom of the Levitical degeneracy, when theſe, and not pure zeal, are made a ſpur for promoting the ſervice of the Lord. Then we might expect to find the church, inſtead of a ſlovenly *negligee*, owing to the poliſhers of her gems being engaged in other purſuits, wear an aſpect of that apoſtolic brilliancy, ſo endearing to her heavenly ſpouſe, and poſſibly our national ſynod leſs eager upon epiſcopiſing a new world, and the inhabitants of this leſs averſe to lawn ſleeves, to the effectual ſtifling of that feud, now ready to blaze in their independent breaſts, as much perhaps from the apprehenſion of encroachments upon their religious as civil Rights and Liberty; nor can it be ſaid,

the

the plan is new, when it is known to be that of Preſbytery, that ſuch has been propoſed in an aſſembly of the States of France, and probably would have paſſed, had it not been for the four tenths advanced in 1661, to the king, for ſix years, for its ſuppreſſion, and that even here Sir Henry Blount and other leading men, have been very active againſt the payment of tythes, being deſirous to have the income of pariſh miniſters reduced to one hundred pounds a year; though I am at a loſs how they could have miſcarried, eſpecially in the time of the Republic.

III. Other points calling for a reformation, I ſhall mention after a few remarks upon *Veridicus*'s Letter of the 4th of October; inſtead of fair argument, he comes now from his late impeachment of my heart to arraign my head, and that in a ſtrain of illiberal abuſe, which, by the bye, muſt not a little reflect upon you, Mr. Printer, for having countenanced me ſo long; had I diſcovered any ſymptoms of ſelf-ſufficiency, he, to check my arrogance, might indeed be allowed to treat me with ſuch harſhneſs; but ſo far from it, that, even in his own account, I ſet out with uncommon *modeſty*, that I here acknowledge myſelf a *moſt miſerable hand*, *a dull fooliſh ſcribbler*, *&c.* and that my eſſays are intended more for receiving than giving information of any kind. To convince him hereof, I take the liberty of ſubmitting the following Queries, touching his ſaid letter, to his conſideration, in hopes he may favour me with an anſwer to each, and his reaſons in ſupport of the ſame, which if but tolerably coercive, will meet with a ſuitable acquieſcence.

IV. 1. Had he not ſhewn more cloſe reaſoning to have replied to my letter of Sept. 12, than flown to freſh matter? or may I not conclude

from this tranſition, that he has, not in *doleful*, but peeviſh *dumps*, given up the points there conteſted, particularly the *capital* one, reſpecting, not *tranſubſtantiation*, but Chriſt's real preſence?

V. 2. If the payment of a promiſſary note is to be underſtood with the proviſo; unleſs ſome good-natured friend ſhould take it up, or the creditor could not be heared of, why ſhould it not be ſo with the ſponſor's compliance with his promiſe, or rather the parſon's exhortation? or is it certain, there is ſcarce one ſponſor in five hundred who has received the holy communion, the only qualification I find required by the 29th Canon for being ſuch, or who has the *religious education* of the child in view?

VI. 3. If it is not making our church odious to ſay, ſhe beſtows the pagan appellation of Sunday upon our Chriſtians ſabbath, why ſhould it be ſo, to derive that of her ſponſors from pagan *ſeconds?*

VII. 4. May a parallel not be drawn betwixt the ſponſorſhip, and the matrimonial engagement, without their being formalities equally indifferent? have they an equal ſanction from ſcripture? or does Veridicus not eſtabliſh the indifferency of the former, by pleading for its reformation or aboliſhment, which can never be pretended to be the caſe with the latter, at leaſt as to the ſubſtance?

VIII. 5. If he will not take the current opinion touching Enoch's being kept in a place ſeparate from the manſions of bliſs, until the coming of Antichriſt (Rev. ii. 7.), may the example of Moſes, whoſe joy, if any, muſt have been but tranſitory, on the mount, or at leaſt that of Satan (Job. i. 6.), not be convincing herein? or after all, are his exceptions reduced at laſt to tautologies?

gies? or are there no ſuch to be met with in the very ſcriptures?

IX. 6. Would he not thank a perſon for preſenting a petition for obtaining a favour at court, although there were but a ſlender probability of its ſucceſs? why then, without the imputation of *bourignoniſm*, guyaniſm or other branch of quietiſm, may we not thank God without any other ſureneſs than mere affiance? is probabiliſm then peculiar to a certain ſchool?

X. 7. Why ſhould the petition, *thy kingdom come*, not be liable to every exception made to the prayer for accompliſhing the number of the elect, &c. Whether underſtood of a fixed number being ſimply decreed, or finally compleated after the laſt day?

XI. 8. Why has he not ſpecified how, or where I have abuſed our divines, ſo groſly however, as to have branded Wake's reaſoning with the appellation of *jargon*, or that of Stillingfleet and Hales with that of *impenetrable nonſenſe?*

XII. 9. Is it likely the Jeſuits, who paſs with him for the main, if not the only ſupports of popery, would retain ſuch a fumbling *tool* as me in its cauſe, when this were acknowledging their own indolence or degeneracy? or is this incoherence not a proof that inconſiderate and blind paſſion lies at the bottom of the charge, which is come too late after I have ſhewn, it is more than probable, I am held by theſe *convertiſſeurs* as an advocate for proteſtantiſm?

XIII. 10. Is his ſuggeſtion for my diſmiſſion in theſe words, *So long as you admit him*, not highly daſtardly and ungenerous; and jointly with his apprehenſion of my probably finding readers, whom my nonſenſe may ſuit, and who may be enraged at the Diſſenters for not being convinced

by my reaſoning, not repugnant to his declared ſenſe of my inſignificancy? or had it not been more honourable to ſhew where I have made ſo *miſerably* wretched a figure, than to have hazarded ſo randomly vague a cenſure, the uſual weapon of the moſt infamouſly common ſcolds?

XIV. In ſhort, Mr. Printer, he muſt not take it amiſs, ſhould I look upon his *now and then touches* in the ſame light, as a well drawn up army does upon the attacks of ſcouting irregulars, who after they let fly, take to their heels, and that to his ſhame, I here refer him for a more chriſtian temper, to the author of *the Creed of the eternal Generationiſts* (page 6.), who himſelf, if not a *boutefeu*, is far from being cool, as his very confederates, if ingenuous, muſt own.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

PACIFICUS.

P. S. Should you, either in compliance to my antagoniſts, or to make room for more important matter, reſolve upon my diſmiſſion, the only favour I beg, Mr. Printer, is that you would, by way of warning, get your reſolution inſerted at the heel of the laſt letter you mean publiſhing for me.

Though I promiſed this ſhould be my laſt, yet this having been upon a ſuppoſition of my being to be diſmiſſed, which ſeemed by his lines not to be the caſe, I ſent the following letter.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, Feb. 8, 1769.

I. SECONDLY, the repeal of thoſe *ipſo facto* anathemas, our church canons ſet out with, which, from their ſavouring ſo much of popiſh tyranny, far from being calculated for conciliating, are ſcaring beyond expreſſion; eſpecially when we take into the account that writ, *de excommunicato capiendo*, countenanced by the 65th canon; attended with ſuch dreadful conſequences, that the very thought makes one ſhudder, inſomuch that it was what frighted our zealous and pious martyrologiſt, Mr. John Fox, into a non-conformity.

I would not, however, have it thought that either theſe, that of the 18th article of religion, or the curſes of the commination office, are ſo inconſiſtent with the genius of chriſtianity, as Mr. Samuel Roe pretends, when we find ſo many traces of ſuch denunciations in the very apoſtolic times (ſee Luke xi. 42. 1 Cor. v. 5. xvi. 22. Gal. i. 8, 9, &c.); their unjuſtifiableneſs I would therefore derive not from the heinouſneſs of their own nature, or the prohibition of any indiſpenſible law: but from the wilfullneſs or lukewarmneſs of the preſent generation; whence, Chriſt ſays, ſprung the lawfulneſs of the Moſaic bills of divorce (Mat. xix. 8.)

II. This conſideration alone has induced our bevolent mother-church, in the ſaid office, to condeſcend to the ſubſtituting of theſe, with the moſt moving and pathetic allurements and threats that can

can be met with in holy writ, to that godly diſcipline made uſe of in primitive times, for reclaiming ſuch perſons as ſtood convicted of notorious ſin: ſhe thought in her great wiſdom meet, that, people's conſtitutions growing feeble and delicate, in proportion as the world waxes old, ſhe might uſe this condeſcenſion, exhorting them at the ſame time to repentance, which was the main end of that diſcipline, whoſe revival ſhe might ſincerely wiſh for, the ſame as Paul did, that the maidens and widows might, like himſelf, remain ſo (1 Cor. vii. 8.), what he could have never expected.

III. As to the homilies making not only ſound doctrine, and due adminiſtration of the ſacraments, but even the right uſe of eccleſiaſtical diſcipline neceſſary notes of a true church (homily for Whit-Sunday), and of courſe, that not only the barely wiſhing for the thing, which looks like diſſembling with God, and impoſing on men, but at leaſt, an attempt of putting it in practice ſhould be made. As to this, I ſay, it, if true, would leave no ſuch thing as a true church upon the face of the earth, as no where, that we know, are the penitential canons in full vigour. And indeed it is ſtrange that in the 19th article of religion, where the definition of the church is expreſsly laid down, diſcipline ſhould not be made one of its ingredients, had it been thought ſuch: So far it is therefore from being ſo, that I fancy ſhe would be well pleaſed to find people live up to her preſent ſet of moderate laws, without ſuch extraordinary ſeverity, and if unfortunately that cannot be obtained, what hopes can there be of this?

IV. The homilies are therefore no rule herein; for though they have a kind of ſanction from the

11th and 35th articles, yet this was not for their being indiſpenſible points of faith, but only for their containing godly and wholſome doctrine neceſſary for thoſe times, all which they may be, and yet not contain a ſingle dogma. Hence it is, that the great character the 3d, of charity, gives Harry the VIIIth, "of being the faithful and true miniſter of God, who did put light in his heart, and gave him the knowledge of his word, and an earneſt affection to ſee his glory, &c. as he gave the like ſpirit unto the moſt noble and famous princes, Joſephat, Joſias, and Hezekiah," is not to be relied on, otherwiſe than ſuitably to the circumſtances of the times, no more than that given to Ahaſuerus by Eſther (Eſth. xv. 16.)

V. 3dly. Either the aboliſhing the rubric before the order for the burial of the dead, or thoſe parts of that office which expreſs the ſtrongeſt hopes of the reſurrection to eternal life, of all thoſe the office is done for, which I find none are refuſed, unleſs it be a perſon unbaptiſed, a *felo de ſe*, or a malefactor delivered to the ſurgeons for diſſection; although, conſidering the above anathemas, and the number cut off in the midſt of notorious ſins, drunkenneſs, adultery, murder, &c. whole herds and ſhoals, as Mr. Tillotſon, or as Mr. White expreſſes it, almoſt half the kingdom we ſhould, in conſiſtence with the rubric and the antient diſcipline of the church, we ſo much revere, interdict from this chriſtian privilege.

VI. Theſe, and the like points, I would willingly ſubſcribe to the reformation of, but ſo as not to come to a rupture, even were the thing never to be complied with. I would as to the like things take pattern by St. Paul (Rom. xiv. 3.); however ſo, as, that ſhould a reformation of the 3d article not take place, I ſhould highly commend archbiſhop

biſhop Sancroft's delicacy of conſcience, who never would undertake the cure of ſouls; not ſo much I ſuppoſe from the dread of a contravention to the rubric, which ſeems to have been, long ſince, enervated by diſuſe, as giving his own ſoul the lye; but am amazed the ſame conſideration has not deterred him from becoming of the miniſtry, by ſubmitting to the laying on of hands, the ſubſcription even previous thereto implying an approbation of the office and rubric, which was equally criminal.

VII. And now, Mr. Printer, to bring the firſt point of my ſcheme to bear, it is left to the readers of your very uſeful paper, to judge if I have performed the taſk of repairing ſuch material breaches as I found made upon our excellent church conſtitution: and if conformiſts have acted the generous part in ſtanding aloof, and expoſing one, labouring in their cauſe to be overpowered by numbers. I have too good a notion of their judgment, to imagine they look upon the point as unintereſting, and not vanity enough to be thought by them ſingly a match for ſo many able antagoniſts. It is a ſtale deiſtical charge that they are ſtrenuous in defence of chriſtianity, not from conviction, but for the ſake of the Egyptian fleſhpots. It does not concern me to clear them herein. I would only expoſe the inconſiſtence of not acting conformably upon a ſimilar occaſion: wherefore, tho' the inſincerity of their ſubſcriptions may be as great as the author of the Confeſſional would have it, yet it is amazing in good policy to find them looking on, where, ſhould a revolution take place, the danger of being reduced to a ſcanty pittance, and drove to ignoble ſhifts to ſupport life, were equally alarming, whereof the ever memorable Mr. Hales, is a ſtriking inſtance: nor do I think

their

their jeopardy leſs imminent from non-conformity than infidelity, nor that in reaſon they could now ſuffer themſelves to be lulled into a greater degree of ſecurity, than were Papiſts in, upon the breaking out of the Reformation, which yet has proved their utter ruin. But very poſſibly ample amends may be made for this ſupinity when I come in the next eſſay to touch upon a more delicate point, a propoſal for aboliſhing ſubſcriptions, and putting the non-conforming upon a thorough equality with the eſtabliſhed clergy, where of courſe not the doctrine, nor mode of worſhip, but church livings, the great ſprings of moſt prieſtly ſtrifes, are to be the bone of contention. Should this be the caſe, and the ſame oppoſition I found from non-conformiſts be made here, I beg it may be in the way of cool and diſpaſſionate argument, not raillery, much leſs invective, the utter abhorrence of

SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

PACIFICUS.

Having a miſtruſt this would never appear, I wrote thus to the Printer of the Gazetteer.

To the Printer of the Gazetteer, February 19, 1769.

YOUR having indulged me ſome time ſince with the inſertion of a few letters of a plan for reconciling the different branches of proteſtancy is the reaſon why I make thus free. My diſmiſſion then having been owing to more intereſting topics coming upon the carpet, gives me ſome hopes, now that the buſtle is ſomewhat abated, of a re-admiſſion. I have already endeavoured in another paper, to vindicate the faith and worſhip of our eſtabliſhed church; it only remains, ſhould Non-conformiſts think this unſatisfactory to ſhew the expediency of extending her preſent bounds of toleration. The whole may amount to ten or twelve letters, of a length to take up about one column in your very uſeful paper.

Conſidering, the ſpirit of intolerance has given riſe to the war now broken out between two of the moſt flouriſhing empires upon the globe, and that it is demonſtrable it, in a great meaſure, lies at the bottom of our preſent domeſtic feuds; the ſubject, far from being unintereſting, is of ſuch importance, as, when once broached, to engage the public's attention. Your letting me know what I have to truſt to will much oblige

Your humble ſervant,

PACIFICUS.

Here no anſwer was made.

For

For the PUBLIC LEDGER.

May 17, 1769.

" *There is a Spirit in Man, but it is the Inſpiration*
" *of the Almighty that giveth it an Underſtand-*
" *ing.*"

I. IF we examine impartially the various ſyſtems of Faith, which the vanity and ignorance of paſt ages have conſpired to form, we ſhall find in each of them much that is repugnant to *reaſon* and *the nature of things.* They are fraught with ſuch glaring abſurdity, and ſelf-evident contradiction, as clearly prove them to have been calculated for the ſervile purpoſe of promoting the intereſts of a party, and to give a falſe gloſs to the avaricious and deſtructive views of *Prieſtcraft* and *Superſtition.* They appear alſo to have been calculated to promote the ſecret unlawful indulgence of ſenſual gratification, at the expence of every ſacred ordinance, and of that purity of heart which can alone render men acceptable in the ſight of God. They alſo tend to pervert the proper uſe and end of thoſe diſcoveries, which the *rational faculty* of man is capable of making, when exerciſed under the influence of that *divine light*, which the *Father of ſure mercies* has uniververſally ſhed upon the human mind to be its guide and director.

Thus we find *thoſe*, whoſe *intereſt* it is to prevent men from making a right uſe of their *reaſon*, have endeavoured to impoſe the fetters of *human authority* upon them, and taught the neceſſity of

an

an *implicit aſſent* to ſuch creeds, or articles of faith as mere *human tradition*, or the determination of *ſynods* has ſtamped with the character of *divine*.

II. In order to effect this, they have depreciated *reaſon*, and ſet it in oppoſition to that *faith* which is accompanied with Salvation. They have repreſented that noble faculty, which is the moſt glorious diſtinction of human beings, as too imperfect to be at all exerciſed on the ſolemn ſubjects of Religion. This has been more or leſs the employment of the *ſuperſtitious*, the *bigot*, and the *enthuſiaſt* of every diſtinct ſect, as well among the *diſſenters*, as in the *eſtabliſhed Church*; and to theſe, wherever they are found, may be applied with propriety the expreſſion of the Apoſtle, "*They have made the commandments of God of none effect by their traditions.*"

The apparent prejudice ſuch have done to the real intereſt of religion and virtue, is ſo obvious, that it has led ſome to ſtep aſide from the middle path of Truth into the contrary extreme. They have repreſented *reaſon* as a guide *abſolutely ſufficient* to direct human actions, allowing no *ſuperior principle*; and attempted to ſet aſide the neceſſity of waiting for that *illumination* which is requiſite to correct its weakneſs, when exerciſed on the important duties of Religion. But theſe men ſeem not to have ſufficiently reflected on the imperfection of *reaſon*, and the danger there is of its becoming ſubſervient to the *paſſions*, or miſled by the falſe appearances of things. They have not conſidered that, although "*the Spirit* (or faculty) *is in man, yet it is the Inſpiration of the Almighty that* can alone *give it a right Uuderſtanding.*"

It may therefore be worth our while to enquire how far Reaſon may be followed; and whether there

there is not a middle path, in which we may ſteer with ſafety. *Reaſon* has been frequently called a *light* and a *guide*, although I think very improperly, and therefore would rather term it *a capacity of ſeeing Light, and of being illuminated by it. Reaſon*, in man, is that *capacity* or *faculty* of the *intelligent ſoul*, by which it perceives the *truth* or *falſity* of any propoſition, as ſoon as the terms of that propoſition become intelligible. And as the *agreement* or *diſagreement* of any propoſition with *ſelf-evident truths* is more or leſs clear to *this capacity*, its *aſſent* to the *truth* or *falſity* of ſuch propoſition will bear an exact proportion.

III. The *rational faculty* is the ſame to the *ſoul* as the *eye* is to the *body*. And therefore whoever allows *Reaſon* no ſhare in diſcovering to us our duty to God, talks juſt as wiſely as though he affirmed, that the *natural eye* was unable to aſſiſt us, or of no uſe to us in tranſacting our temporal affairs. And on the other hand, thoſe who repreſent *Reaſon* as *abſolutely ſufficient* in matters of Religion, are equally weak as though they maintained the ſufficiency of the *natural eye* for the various purpoſes of life, excluſive of the influence of *corporeal light* upon it. The ſtrongeſt influence of the ſun's rays are uſeleſs to that man, who is either naturally blind, or, having eyes refuſes to open them; and the moſt glorious illumination of *divine light*, are uſeleſs both to the *natural ideot*, who is *mentally blind*, or to the criminal ideot, who, having a *mental eye*, or in other words, *rational faculty* implanted in his ſoul, refuſes to uſe it.

IV. "*There is a Spirit in Man*," a rational capacity, capable of being illuminated with the rays of celeſtial light. A meaſure or manifeſtation of this ſacred light has appeared, and does ſtill appear

to every individual, in a juſt proportion to that duty which God requires of them, and, if followed will lead them in the path of eternal peace. But perhaps ſome may objećt, " Why then are not all men guided by it?" The anſwer is obvious, they do not exerciſe their *reaſon*, their *mental eye*, in a conſtant attention to its diſcoveries.

When the gratification of inferior appetites and paſſions has ſealed the *mental eye*, and encompaſſed it with the miſts of ſenſuality, it then perceives not the illuminations of that light which was intended to give it an underſtanding. But when rightly exerciſed it is ſufficient for us; and it is the *abuſe*, not the *proper uſe* of our reaſon, that renders us unhappy.

Therefore it may be truly aſſerted, that no part of that religion, whoſe author is God, can be inconſiſtent with the plain dictates of our reaſon. Or in other words, that nothing can be required of mankind, as an eſſential point of duty, but what the rational faculty of man is capable of comprehending as ſuch, when exerciſed under the influence of that illumination, which giveth it a right underſtanding.

V. The ſtate of the unattentive irrational mind is excellently deſcribed by the apoſtle, when he tells us, that *light ſhineth in darkneſs, but the darkneſs comprehendeth it not.* The ſacred beams of this light ſhine forth uninterruptedly on the intellectual eye of the ſoul. But it is often neglected, and eclipſed by thoſe miſts of *error* which the undue influence of ſenſuality, or the bias of example and education raiſes in the mind. And that immoderate attention which the mind pays to objects infinitely beneath its notice, divert it from that point of view in which it can alone " *Judge what is right.*"

As

VI. As we could have no knowledge of the objects that ſurround us, but by and through the medium of our *ſenſitive organs*; neither can the ſoul receive any *intellectual knowledge*, but what is communicated to it through the medium of the *rational faculty*. This faculty muſt therefore, in the nature of things, be capable of perceiving whatever is propoſed to it; for it cannot, without the greateſt abſurdity, be ſuppoſed that the Deity would give forth a revelation to mankind, which the beſt exertion of their faculties could not underſtand, or was not qualified to judge.

He who is juſt and equal in all his ways has wiſely proportioned our faculties to thoſe objects which are of the higheſt concernment to us, and on which they ought to be applied. Therefore for any to preach up the neceſſity of our believing in *tenets*, or of practiſing things as *duties*, which our *reaſon*, on the moſt impartial ſcrutiny, cannot comprehend to be ſuch, is a proof of the moſt egregious folly, and does real injury to the intereſts of Religion itſelf. If any thing is impoſed on mankind, as a part of *religion*, which, on ſuch a ſcrutiny appears inconſiſtent with the dictates of *reaſon*, we may reſt ſatisfied it can have no relation to us, and there is too much reaſon to queſtion its divine authority.

VII. The religion that pleaſes God, and the duties which he requires of *rational beings*, are adapted to their different degrees of underſtanding, and comprehenſible by it. When ſtript of thoſe *artful appendages*, and *baſe alloy*, which ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm have blended with it, *true religion* is plain and ſimple, and not perplexed with *myſteries* which the mind cannot penetrate.

The eſſential articles of the chriſtian faith, as eſtabliſhed by its glorious founder, are immuta-

ble in their nature; and may be underſtood by the loweſt capacity amongſt us, ſo far as relates to their future well being.

VIII. Be not deceived by the artful inſinuations of an *enthuſiaſtic zeal*, not tempered with *real wiſdom*. Lean not to the right-hand, nor to the left. Be not miſled by thoſe who endeavour to debaſe the moſt glorious prerogative of human nature, and ſet *reaſon* on a level with the mere inſtinct of the lower orders of creation: neither join with thoſe who preſumptuouſly aſſert its independency, and allow of no ſuperior principle. *Reaſon* was given to man to enable him to ſee his duty, and, ſeeing, to perform it. It is placed in *man*, although not *of man*, but *of God*; and by which he bears the neareſt relation to *angelic beings*. It is through this medium that he aſpires in wiſdom and knowledge towards the perfection of his nature, and enjoys an holy intercourſe with the Father of Spirits, and Fountain of every Good.

IX. To cultivate and improve this *gift of God*, is the indiſpenſible duty of every rational being; and will prove their higheſt conſolation, when the end of all things is at hand. In that awful ſeaſon we ſhall be convinced of its dignity and worth, and look back with delight on thoſe hours, wherein we have endeavoured to improve it, and follow its direction: and, perhaps, look forward with increaſing tranſport to that ſtate, in which this divine faculty will glorioufly expand with immortal vigour and undecaying ſtrength. — That ſtate, wherein it will receive new acceſſions of glory, and be rendered capable of being inceſſantly employed in the delightful contemplation of objects celeſtial for ever and ever.

I am, &c.

A Lover of Truth, and all good Men.

To the Printer of the Public Ledger, May 18, 1769.

I. THE Great Apoſtle Paul, in his Epiſtle to the Romans, chap. xiv. has aſſured us, that "*The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*"

This Text contains a plain and poſitive declaration, that the Chriſtian Religion in all its eſſential branches, is a *moral Conſtitution*, ariſing from the very nature of things; and from thence it follows, that it is clear, determinate, and eaſy to be comprehended by the loweſt capacities. It reſolves it into that *moral Rectitude*, that purity of heart, and integrity of life and manners, which is ever pleaſing in the ſight of God.

II. This *moral Rectitude*, or uprightneſs of heart and conduct, however *inſufficient* it may have been repreſented by ſome *modern Viſionaries*, (who are at times loſt to *Common Senſe* in the airy regions of *Metaphyſical Divinity*) yet it appears to be the only ſure baſis of the Chriſtian's hope of divine favour in a future ſtate of being. By *moral Rectitude*, I would not be underſtood in that contracted ſenſe, wherein ſome *ſuper-rational Enthuſiaſts* have uſed the expreſſion. *They* have confined *Morality* to a mere exemption from the flagrant *Vices* of the Age; and to the practice of common *Juſtice and Honeſty* in tranſacting the affairs of life. This is indeed a good ſtep, but far, very far ſhort of the extent of *Morality* in its true nature. To *their* imperfect deſcription of it, I

would add the practice of every virtue that does honour to humanity, by promoting the *happineſs*, and as far as in our power, preventing the *unhappineſs* of the reſt of the Creation. A conduct of this benevolent kind, produced by a conſtant humbling ſenſe of our own dependancy and imperfection, and a juſt idea of the glorious perfections and attributes of him, who has called us to glory and virtue, and of love to him from the infinite obligations he has laid upon us, conſtitute that *moral Rectitude*, which is the perfection of our natures. Theſe are the moſt amiable and uſeful virtues that can adorn the mind; they are becoming human nature, ſuited to the condition of intelligent Spirits, and the only ſure foundation of true and laſting felicity.

III. From the obvious ſenſe of the text, it appears that all ſuch parts of the *Chriſtian Revelation* as appear *dark*, *intricate*, or *ambiguous*, together with all *ceremonious Rights*, *Doctrines*, or *Articles of Faith*, evidently built upon them, are of *inferior*, if any moment, and are not eſſentially connected with the great and ultimate end of Religion.

The view exhibited of *Chriſtianity* by its great Author, and firſt Promulgators, was truly *rational* and *beautiful*, *ſimple* and *plain*, yet intrinſically excellent and apparently *divine*. But ſince that period, *Superſtition* and *Enthuſiaſm* have defaced its genuine beauty, and it has been the employment of numbers, either from *ignorance* or *intereſt*, to change, perplex, and disfigure its original complexion and comelineſs. In thoſe countries where Popery is eſtabliſhed, the *Kingdom of God* is all the various mummery of ſuperſtitious worſhip, all the *Penances* which they have invented for the remiſſion of ſins, and the believing

that

that as *true*, which reaſon and common ſenſe demonſtrate to be *falſe*. It is a hypocritical unity of Faith, deſtitute of ſincerity; the deſtruction of all called Heretics, and the tortures of a mercileſs and horrid inquiſition, by the prevalence of which *Morality* and *Sincerity* is ſacrificed between *Ignorance* and *Zeal* to a pretence of *Religion*, worſe than *Atheiſm* itſelf. And if we examine the Creed and practice of churches that may juſtly lay claim to *greater Purity*, and which are indeed happily reformed from many *groſs Errors* held by that Antichriſtian Communion, the *Kingdom of God* is ſtill too much debaſed by unworthy and low conceptions of him, and of the worſhip that he requires of men. Many ſtill ſuppoſe it to conſiſt in *forms*, *rituals*, and a *ceremonious* external worſhip; and, like ſome formerly, they are crying out, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are theſe.*" Their practice declares, that they think the *Kingdom of God*, a Kingdom erected for the introduction of Ceremony, and external formality. But our Saviour hath declared *the Kingdom of God is within you.* It is indeed within, and conſiſts in that complete *moral Rectitude*, that purity of heart and ſincerity of action, which the Goſpel hath taught, and which its holy founder is *ſtill teaching* in the hearts of mankind. The *Kingdom of God* conſiſts not in *meats* or *drinks*, or in external obſervations; but in *Moral Righteouſneſs*, the conſequence of which is *Peace*, and *Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.* His Government over free and rational Beings, is adapted to their nature and rank in his family, in order that mankind might unite with the higheſt orders of intelligent Beings, in obeying the ſacred will of the Common Father of the Univerſe.

IV. Whenever any *Rites* and *Uſages* are introduced, which in their own nature are *indifferent*, and which have no natural, and invariable connection with the ſubſtantial principles and duties of Religion, they tend to divert men's attention from the ſteady uniform practice of thoſe eſſential principles and duties, which are the very *Soul* of vital Holineſs. That Syſtem of Religion which has the leaſt *alloy*, the leaſt of theſe unavailing mixtures blended with it, is certainly the moſt excellent in its nature, and beneficial to mankind.

All *ceremonious-trappings*, *time-ſerving worſhip*, and pretended *myſteries* in Religion, have ever been the united produce of *ignorance*, *ſuperſtition*, and a *falſe zeal*, devoid of that charity and benevolence, which is the glory of our nature. They have been always annexed to *falſe Religion*, to amuſe the credulous multitude, who are eaſily captivated by external pomp and ſplendour in the public worſhip of God. Thoſe who thus eſtabliſh a dominion over the *conſciences* and *purſes* of men for their own emolument, have always been very declamatory on the ſide of *faith without evidence*; and loudly exclaimed againſt the exerciſe of *Reaſon*, *their mortal enemy*, becauſe they knew that would detect the impoſture, and expoſe the fallacy.

V. Although a worſhip of this nature was permitted to Iſrael of old, becauſe they were bigotted to the ſuperſtition of the Heathen world, who were immerſed in ignorance and *Polytheiſm*, yet the Apoſtle has deſcribed the *Moſaic Law of Rituals* under the moſt debaſing and *contemptible images*, as being "*weak and beggarly Elements*," and mere "*carnal Ordinances*," impoſed until the time of reformation ſhould come. But the appearance

pearance of the *Son of God* in the Fleſh, and the glorious introduction of the Goſpel in its native Purity and Luſtre, was intended to reſtore univerſal Righteouſneſs in the Earth, and that his *ſpiritual kingdom* might be erected in their hearts.

It is therefore lamentable to conſider that theſe things ſtill remain, and are too much practiſed amongſt a people profeſſing the Chriſtian name. A people whoſe underſtandings have been inlarged by thoſe invaluable records of ſacred truth, the Scriptures, and who pretend to make its precepts the rule of their faith and practice.

To conclude: amuſe not yourſelves with unreal phantoms and deluſive hopes; but ſeek with diligence to cultivate that compleat *moral Rectitude*, which conſtitutes *the kingdom of God. Without this*, all the pompous parade of external ceremonious worſhip will be but *ſolemn trifling*, and terminate in ſorrow. *With this* in your poſſeſſion, you will be prepared to join the world of ſpirits with exceeding joy, when the end of all things is at hand.

I am, &c.

RATIONALIS.

Theſe two Letters, ſeemingly occaſioned by my eſſays, gave me, I thought, a fair handle of writing thus:

To

To the PUBLIC LEDGER, *May* 26, 1769.

IT being ſome time that the affairs of the Freehold and Bill of Rights gentlemen, which of late have ſo much engroſſed the public attention, have ſomewhat ſubſided, *Pacificus* had ſome hopes his laſt letter, of February 8, would have appeared, eſpecially as in the courſe of laſt week you made room for two, the one ſigned *A Lover of Truth and all good Men*, the other *Rationalis*, both calculated to decry indifferent formalities and myſteries in religion, two points he has hitherto been endeavouring to juſtify in the faith and worſhip of our eſtabliſhed church: imagining his right to your uſeful paper not inferior to theirs, begs to know how far he may be wrong, or if right, whether in this vacation time he may expect your kind indulgence for purſuing his plan, which would be compleated in about three months, at the rate of one letter per week, or at leaſt that of having his ſaid letter ſoon inſerted, which otherwiſe he prays may be ſent by the penny poſt, directed to, *&c.* which will much oblige

Your humble Servant,

MEANWELL.

No anſwer being made, I wrote again by another name.

To the GAZETTEER, *June* 7, 1769.

HAVING obſerved, in the courſe of laſt year, many letters ſigned Pacificus, upon an attempt of bringing about a reconciliation between the different branches of Proteſtancy in this nation, a topic his very antagoniſts acknowledge well worthy the conſideration of all Proteſtants, with ſome judicious remarks, by way of reply, thereupon; it gives me no ſmall concern to ſee the little ſpirit ſo important a plan is carried on withal; what to attribute this languor to, whether to him or printer they are beſt judges. I only ſay, it were pity ſuch a ſubject, deſerving the exertion of our beſt head-

pieces

pieces both in church and ſtate, ſhould be dropped. It conſiſted of two branches, 1. a vindication of our eſtabliſhed way of worſhip, as to all its thought exceptionable parts; and, 2. ſhould this not prove ſatisfactory, an indiſcriminate comprehenſion of proteſtants of every ſort. The firſt he has diſpatched ſeemingly to his own ſatisfaction, in the enjoyment of which I do not mean to diſturb him. After the expiration of better than ſeven months, with the appearance of but one of his letters, I deſpair of ever ſeeing the other broached: wherefore it is, that if no one elſe undertakes the taſk, I offer my ſervice, with the proviſo of being admitted a place in your uſeful paper, whereof the inſertion of this will be held as a proof, by your's

B——V——S.

But to this was likewiſe lent the deaf ear, which made me ſend

---

LETTER XL.

To the Printer of the Morning Chronicle, June 16, 1769.

I. THE partiality of ſome daily papers, ſo detrimental to the cauſe of juſtice and truth, and whereof, amongſt others, you make a plea to the Public, in favour of your's, is ſo notorious, that it ſhould ſeem alone ſufficient for the encouragement you claim: but as no profeſſions of impartiality can be more ſolemn than thoſe they make, the event alone can determine your ſteadineſs and ſtrict adherence thereto. To make you maſter of my plan, and preclude every apology for my diſmiſſion in future, ſhould you once accept of my correſpondence, you muſt know, that, obſerving from ſome late publications, the little harmony

mony ſubſiſting betwixt the different branches of proteſtancy in this land, I turned my thoughts towards doing all in my power to remedy the evil, firſt by offering my reaſons in vindication of our eſtabliſhed mode of worſhip; and, ſhould this not prove ſucceſsful, ſecondly, for the extention of the Toleration Act, ſo as to qualify Proteſtants, of all denominations, in their ſeveral capacities, for all offices in church and ſtate, compatible with our preſent form of civil government, without glancing upon any one controvertial point, as ill ſuited to the taſte of the times. With this general idea, I introduced myſelf to the Printer of the Ledger, who, after countenancing me from February 4, 1768, to the 11th of laſt October, has ſince indulged me with but one letter, of the 6th of February laſt, though I ſent him another immediately after, and, what appears ſtill more ſtrange, though ſollicited thereto, will neither diſcharge me, aſſign any reaſon for his ſlackneſs, nor even return my laſt letter; a rare example this of a loudly boaſted *uninfluenced* impartiality; he fondly imagines, ſilence can give no handle to diſſatisfaction or complaint, and that nothing leſs than a poſitive act of excluſion from his paper, can impeach his candour, not conſidering that a perſon's very abſconſion would, in the eye of the law, conſtitute an act of bankruptcy, equally the ſame as an abſolute refuſal of anſwering a creditor's juſt demand. It is from ſuch inſtances of diſingenuity it firſt became proverbial, that *fronti nulla fides:* and *there is no faith in man.*

II. In this diſheartening circumſtance it therefore is that I crave the liberty of your uſeful paper, calculated, I preſume, for the defence, as well of our religious as civil rights, in order to purſue the

the ſecond part of my plan, which would be finiſhed in about twelve letters, of a length each, to fill one of its columns. Your inſerting this, or otherwiſe ſignifying your determination, would much oblige

PACIFICUS.

III. That you may better judge if my correſpondence be worth your acceptance, I ſend you ſome ſtrictures upon two letters publiſhed in the Ledger, the one ſigned, *A Lover of Truth, and all good Men*, of the 17th, the other *Rationalis*, of the 18th ult. calculated to decry myſteries and indifferent ceremonies in religion. This they have in common, that both ſtick in general and vague invectives, without deſcending to any particulars, and, Quixot like, fall a ſwaggering when they find my back turned. How comes it they did not appear while I was labouring the vindication of our church ceremonies, and the myſtery of the Trinity? They preſumed, I ſuppoſe, that having had but one letter inſerted ſince laſt October, they ſhould hear no more of me: their conjecture, perhaps, had been well grounded, had any one elſe entered the liſts for the common cauſe; but this, through the extreme decline of religious zeal, not happening, I, with your leave, Mr. Printer, will undertake to expoſe every ſhadow of argument I diſcover in theſe productions, levelled as well againſt the diſſenting as the eſtabliſhed church, without medling with ſome of their philoſophical inaccuracies.

IV. The firſt, from the neceſſity of reaſon ever attending revelation, for the belief of its tenets and practice of its duties, concludes, that no part of religion, whoſe author is God, can be above the comprehenſion of the former, which I fancy ſhould be underſtood with ſome limitation. I own the expedience both of the belief and practice ſhould be ſeen thereby either in a direct or reflected light, but not always in the firſt.

V. What we know of worldly affairs from our own experience is but trifling, compared to what

we are beholden to others for: why then may it not be ſometimes ſo with our ſpiritual? an inhabitant of the torrid zone rationally gives credit to the effect of froſt upon water towards the poles, without his ever having ſeen a ſcrap of ice, the patient ſubmits to his phyſician, the client to his lawyer, though utter ſtrangers to their technical terms; and, to uſe his own example of the natural eye, the lady in her toilette truſts to the fidelity of her glaſs for a juſt idea of her features, the blind man to his guide, for finding his way, though not at all perceptible by their own ſenſes: and yet we muſt not take God's word, nor obey his orders, unleſs made ſenſible of their intrinſic reaſonableneſs: tho', as the great Stillingworth juſtly obſerves, no demonſtration can be ſtronger than this: God hath ſaid ſo: therefore it is true.

VI. Can it be ſuppoſed, that one man may know what another may not; but that the caſe is different with God, in regard to us? tho' blind obedience, as to belief or practice, may not ſuit the genius of a popular or mixed government, ſuch as ours, muſt it follow, it muſt have no merit in a pure monarchy, ſuch as the Creator's? or even that it may not be preferable to that exhibited with our eyes open? or were it not often better be led upon the edge of a precipice, than ſee one's own way? or, in fine, in the Chriſtian or other revealed ſyſtem, may humility not ever excel overweening knowledge? and indeed, were reaſon always to take cognizance of, and pronounce upon the propriety of every point of this heavenly illumination, the conſequence might be very fatal; on pretence of crying down prieſtcraft, could we not diſcard the very prieſthood, and for this reaſon, that, in the nature of things, ſuch ſhould

ſeem

ſeem needleſs, "Chriſt's ſpiritual kingdom having been created in every one's heart," the offering whereof is never acceptable at the throne of grace, unleſs made, not by a prieſt, but by him whoſe it is?

VII. Nay, on this principle of Rationalis, could we not aboliſh all externals whatever in worſhip, under the additional colour of their "tending to divert mens attention from the ſteady uniform practice of thoſe eſſential duties, which are the ſoul of vital holineſs;" without conſidering they may engage the ſoul in the contemplation of its divine object, as the regular ſymetry of the celeſtial orbs doth in that of its great author? might they not have been meant for the purpoſe? nay, and often attended with the happy effect; though "for eſtabliſhing a dominion over mens conſciences and purſes, they might have been as often abuſed in favour of falſe religions, by amuſing the credulous multitude, eaſily captivated by external pomp and ſplendour, and making them believe the kingdom of God conſiſts in ſuch mummery?" or has the beauty of the ſphere not often been productive of ſuch extatic raptures; tho' ſelfiſhneſs, or ſome meaner vice, has unfortunately made it ſubſervient to idolatry? ſhould ſome wrong-headed and taſteleſs people pretend, that modes and faſhions, and the different orders of architecture conſtitute the ſubſtance of our rayment and dwellings, deſtined by nature for our defence againſt the inclemency of the ſeaſons, ſhould they be diſuſed for that? why therefore ſhould church ceremonies be ſo, for their being over-rated by ſome enthuſiaſtic bigots?

VIII. It may be objected, that the belief of ſome myſteries can be of no real advantage to the cauſe of morality or virtue, or incentive to the diſcharge

of

of any rational duty; as it ſhould ſeem indifferent for this purpoſe, whether, for inſtance, we held three perſons in God, whereof the firſt were our creator, the ſecond our redeemer, and the third our ſanctifier, or only one for all the three functions. But may the Atheiſt not do as much? Is it not poſſible, he may have a juſt ſenſe of every ſocial duty, without the belief of a God, which yet may be obligatory? Nor do I ſee why the belief of a truth may not be exacted, though we may be in the dark with regard to its moral or other tendency. If the Jews, nay Chriſt's very diſciples have not always been appriſed of the deſigns of Providence, until the accompliſhment of what they had been foretold: why ſhould we pretend to be made acquainted with the ſcope of ſome myſteries, before the final upſhot of all things? or is a blind acquieſcence to the oracles of an omniſcient not preferable to a too curiouſly inſiſting upon their reaſonableneſs? But this is the unhappy ſource of religious debates, both parties equally pretending to have in view but the vindication of God's veracity; when, in the main their own ſenſe of his expreſſions may be the whole of what they ſtickle in. By giving this a place you will, I dare be bold to ſay, Mr. Printer, approve yourſelf to the true patrons of religion, and much oblige your's, as above.

Being given to underſtand this could not be inſerted, I had recourſe to the M——x J—— l, and here begins

THE

THE REAL SEEKER.

PART IV.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THUS far I have endeavoured to vindicate the eſtabliſhed church from the imputations I found made a handle of for keeping her at a diſtance. It is the firſt branch of my pacification ſcheme: So far, however, am I from pretending my reaſons unanſwerable, that I give it up to my antagoniſts, who ſeem right or wrong determined never to give out, and proceed to my ſecond, *viz.* that, even ſuppoſing the diſſenters' ſcruples never ſo ill grounded, yet a toleration ſhould be allowed them: This I go upon, in hopes our church might be induced to ſome condeſcenſion on this ſcore; not that I think her more peaceably inclined than Non-conformiſts; but that, upon a diſputed game, it is more likely both parties may be ſooner prevailed on to divide the ſtakes, than one to relinquiſh the whole. The many diſappointments I met with from the managers of the public prints, had deterred me from ever venturing with them again, was it not for the ſpecious title, *Chronicle of Liberty*, aſſumed by the Middleſex Journal; whether its oſtentatious pretenſion to the protectorſhip of this brilliant gem be real or farcical will ſoon appear by the following correſpondence.

LETTER XLI.

To the Publiſher of the Middleſex Journal, *July* 6, 1769.

SIR,

HAVING obſerved your ſpirited paper to be deſigned in ſupport of our civil liberties, I made no doubt, eſpecially upon finding a corner thereof conſecrated to the purpoſe, of your being equally zealous in that of the more glorious cauſe of our religious liberty. Slaviſh hypocriſy, or indigence, the direful effect of tyranny, is the common grievance complained of on both ſides, and it is well known, every generous ſoul is as impatient of having a clog thrown upon his freedom of thought, as any, however valuable, worldly property wreſted out of his hands. The groans of timorous and truly ingenuous ſouls, eminent for every patriotic, ſocial, and chriſtian virtue, labouring under the inſupportable yoke of declarations and ſubſcriptions to ſyſtematical creeds, and formalities of human device, and, however ſeemingly impertinent to the advancement of public weal, made neceſſary qualifications, not only for the ſacred miniſtry, but even poſts in the ſtate, are too loud to be concealed. It is towards procuring them ſome relief, by an endeavour to promote a benevolent ſpirit of mutual tolerance, and remove every check to conſcience being its own religious arbiter, that I would offer my ſervice in a continued correſpondence, if, Mr. Publiſher, agreeable to you; whereof

the inſertion of this will be held as a proof by you humble ſervant,

LIBERTY.

*** *We accept this correſpondent's favours very cordially, and ſhould be glad if a number of ſuch, and as able, were ſtill encreaſing.*

LETTER XLII.

To the Publiſher of the Middleſex Journal, *July* 13, 1769.

SIR,

I. THE obliging manner, in which you ſignify the acceptableneſs of my correſpondence, demands my grateful acknowledgment, and utmoſt exertion for promoting, by ſome eſſays, the avowedly deſirable end of damping that religiouſly dictatorial notion, which has ſo long obtained amongſt us. The attempt of removing ſo deep rooted an evil is, I muſt own, too arduous to flatter myſelf with any tolerable degree of ſucceſs: however urgent my reaſons may appear in my own eyes, it is poſſible others may ſee them in ſuch a light, as if prepoſſeſſion, caprice or intereſt, and not conviction, the genuine fruit of fair argument, lay at the bottom. Such is generally the fate of thoſe, who act with moderation, they are diſliked and abuſed by much the greater majority of even both parties, the zealots; beſides many more, the treatment the right reverend

reverend biſhop of London, Henry Compton, met with at the Revolution, for his comprehenſive ſcheme, is a ſignal proof of this; but the charge I ſhall expect to be made out to ſatisfaction, which I preſume will not be thought unreaſonable; for though it may be impoſſible to make all people think alike, it cannot be ſo, to tell their minds and aſſign their reaſons for being in the oppoſition.

II. How far toleration may be reaſonably expected to extend in reference to Non-conformiſts will be the ſubject of a further enquiry; at preſent I ſhall only conſider it as barely implying an immunity from forfeiture and corporal puniſhment; for though they thus far enjoy the privilege, yet it cannot be amiſs, by way of preamble, to canvaſs their right thereto, were it but to ſtop the mouths of ſuch as may envy it them, and repreſs, if poſſible, that inhuman ſpirit ſo prevalent under popiſh meridians, where inquiſitions, dragoonades, confederacies, &c. make ſuch havock, and thereby prevent the horrid monſter of intolerance from ever rearing its baleful head in a Chriſtian land.

III. Toleration was the ſenſe of the firſt chriſtian emperor, expreſſed in his excellent letter touching the Arian ſchiſm, worthy every man's peruſal; that of the incomparable Chriſtina, Queen of Sweden, who loudly condemned the proſecution of Proteſtants in France, though Mr. Baile has been forced to acknowledge her a ſincere and thorough convert; that of the famous Boyle, Locke, Newton, &c. nay that of our own legiſlature, in paſſing the toleration act, and of our preſent national ſynod, in recommending *moderation and chriſtian charity* towards ſuch as unfortunately differ from the eſtabliſhed church, in their

loyal and affectionate addreſs to the throne: it ſhould be that of every rational man, and eſpecially conſiſtent proteſtant. "Jeſus Chriſt, ſays the ſpirited author of the *Confeſſional*, hath by his goſpel, called all men to liberty, the glorious liberty of the ſons of God, and reſtored them to the privilege of working out their own ſalvation, by their own underſtandings and endeavours; for this work of ſalvation ſufficient means are afforded in the holy ſcriptures, without having recourſe to the doctrines and commandments of men. In theſe ſcriptures all things needful for ſpiritual living and man's ſoul's health are mentioned and ſhewed; conſequently, faith and conſcience, having no dependance on man's laws, are not to be compelled by man's authority, and none other hath the church of Rome to ſhew for the ſpiritual dominion ſhe claimeth. The church of Chriſt is congregated by the word of God, and not by man's laws, nor are the king's laws any further to be obeyed, than they agree with the laws of God;" and this I look upon to be the groundwork of proteſtancy.

IV. And indeed, what Chriſtian could expect a religious demonſtration ſo coercive as to extort a general aſſent, when that of Chriſt's meſſiahſhip, notwithſtanding its unparalelled force of evidence, has for ſo many centuries met with ſuch contradiction from the Jews? Who could ever expect to put ſo far fetched and little demonſtrable a thing as a religious ſyſtem beyond all contradiction, ſo far as to engage people of never ſo different ways of thinking to embrace it; eſpecially when there was never any, which might not be liable to doubts upon doubts? Religion is a worſhip due to the Deity; reaſon alone may indeed ſhew him intitled to our homage; but the manner

manner it ſhould be payed in, ſhould come from heaven. What proceeds from that quarter muſt indeed afford the greateſt ſecurity, but the truth and mode of its conveyance may be ſubject to many ſcruples; the only way of getting over theſe is by means of prophecies or miracles; but the one and the other have their uncertainties. Though I may be ſure God alone has a diſtinct knowledge of future caſualties, and his goodneſs to be ſuch as not to deceive us in the communication thereof; yet I may not be ſo certain, that he, and not ſome impoſtor, has foretold them; nor do I find any ſelf-evident criterion thereof, when Chriſt, Caiphas, nay, and the Sibils have alike prophecied. The event will decide nothing, as it will be the ſame, though the forecaſt had been but mere hap-hazard; and indeed Chriſt himſelf gives room to think, prophecy alone is not much to be depended on without miracles, when he ſays, (John xv. 24.) *If I had not done among them the works that no other man did, they had not had ſin:* The prophecies that had gone before had therefore not rendered them inexcuſable; and conſequently might not be ſuch convincing proofs; but of miracles in my next, meanwhile I remain

Your humble ſervant,

LIBERTY.

LETTER XLIII.

To the Publiſher of the Middleſex Journal, *July* 20, 1769.

(Continued.)

SIR,

I. EVEN thus it is with miracles themſelves, God alone may certainly have it in his power to ſuſpend or invert the common laws of nature; but where this is pretended to be done, might it not be that ſome ſagacious cheats had diſcovered ſome of her latent receſſes and mechaniſms never diſplayed before, or at leaſt ſo little known until then, as to be reckoned, if not contrary, beſide her ordinary courſe? Not to mention many extraordinary curious phœnomenas of electricity, optics, phoſphorus, &c. diſcovered in our days; what is legerdemain but nature improved? yet we have heard of ſome proficients in that art taken for ſorcerers. Burning-glaſſes are but the effects of obſervations made upon the laws of refraction; yet had the diſcovery been made in the time of Elias (1 Kings, xviii. 38.) and Nehemiah (2 Mac. i. 22.) ſo as to have been known to them, it is poſſible, the burning of their ſacrifices by the rays of the ſun, might as well be attributed thereto, as the deſtroying of a fleet by Archimedes: Far be it, however, from me to imagine the Bible miracles could be reſolved into the ſecret ſprings of nature, or, by any means to attempt to enervate the force of the Deity's peculiarly characteriſtic language to man, by

by aſcribing with Fludd, Woolſton, Dr. Connor, and other ſuch infidels, the miraculous cures of the goſpel, for inſtance, to ſomething like the noſtrums of our empyrical quacks; forbid it Heaven! I only ſay, that to draw a line between ſome of her hidden workings, or necromancy on the one hand, and true miracles on the other, with ſuch preciſion, that no one, however ſimple, could be deceived in making the diſcernment, is no eaſy taſk; and of courſe, that great allowances ſhould be made for ſuch as may be ſo. Had Aaron's rod not ſwallowed up thoſe of the Egyptian ſorcerers (Exod. vii. 12.) the transformation thereof into a ſerpent, had perhaps never evinced the truth of Moſes's miſſion in the eyes of Pharaoh, whoſe magicians had done as much.

II. If this might be the caſe with eye and ear witneſſes, what muſt it be with us, who have the account handed down thorough a long ſeries or chain of years; whereof, as Mr. Locke obſerves, every link or remove from the fountain head, is liable to a new degree of uncertainty; but allowing teſtimonial evidence its due weight, and that our ſcripture-revelation has been undoubtedly made; who will take upon him to aſcertain the genuineneſs of its now texts? not to mention that the collation of our copied records, even in the primitive idioms, is now impracticable, the originals being loſt, who can be ſure the tranſlations made thereof into other languages are accurate, eſpecially where ſuch a diverſity of readings of the ſeveral editions in the ſame tongue, and ſuch incorrectneſſes in one and the ſame edition are to be met with, that in the ſpace of ſeventy-two years, from 1535, when the firſt tranſlation of the whole Bible was made into Engliſh, 'till 1607, it went through four reviews, in which were made conſiderable

ſiderable amendments and improvements, and that a freſh tranſlation is cried out for at this day?

III. But granting them exact both in themſelves and compared to each other; are words not often ſo equivocal, and ſentences ſo varied in their ſignification by but a trifling wrong punctuation, as to miniſter abundant matter of doubt, conteſt, and perplexity? Of the former there are inſtances without number; of the latter take this; *ibis, redibis, nunquam per bella peribis:* now may this not be the caſe as well with Proteſtants, as Pagans, and other religious diſputants? or ſuppoſing ſtill the bible expreſſions ſo very univocal, and phraſes ſo well pointed, as not to be eaſily miſunderſtood, may people's conceptions, the ſame as their taſtes, not yet be ſo different herein, as to merit rather forbearance and compaſſion than reprimand and legal puniſhment? And here indeed, if any where, the maxim of the law, making the reader ſome grains of allowance againſt him, who could have ſpoke plainer, is in my opinion, to take place.

IV. If the caſe is thus, when the ground of a religion is pretended to be divine, what muſt it be, when it is purely of human invention? what can be met with here to reſt our ſecurity from all doubt upon? To ſay nothing of the reveries of Mahomet, upon whoſe death, ſprung ſo many different ſects; of the ſevere morals of Confucius, which dwindled in China ſince the importation of the idol Phohi; who could imagine the planners of our liturgy and articles, endued with ſuch infallibility as to make their works meet with univerſal approbation? or Calvin and Preſbytery ſo unerring, as to make the Geneva platform, and

Scotch

Scotch covenant, looked upon as unexceptionable?

V. Let us hear Mr. Locke's humorous cenſure upon intolerance for things of indifference. "If I am marching on with my utmoſt vigour, in that way, which according to the ſacred geography, leads ſtraight to Jeruſalem, why am I, ſays he, beaten and abuſed by others, becauſe, perhaps, I wear not buſkins? becauſe my hair is not of a right cut? becauſe I have not been dipped in the right faſhion? becauſe I eat fleſh on the road? becauſe I avoid certain bye-ways which ſeem to lead into briars and precipices? becauſe amongſt the ſeveral paths, that are in the ſame road, I chuſe to walk in that which ſeems to me the ſtraighteſt and cleaneſt? becauſe I avoid to keep company with ſome travellers, that are leſs grave, or others that are more ſower than they ought to be? or in fine, becauſe I follow not a guide, that either is or is not cloathed in white and crowned with a mitre?"

VI. Speaking of an intolerant magiſtrate, even ſuppoſing there were but one way to heaven, he aſks, "does his care of the commonwealth, or his right to enact laws diſcover this more certainly to him than every private man's own ſearch and ſtudy doth to himſelf? I have a body ſick under a languiſhing diſeaſe, for which I ſuppoſe there is but one remedy, and that unknown; does it therefore belong to the magiſtrate to preſcribe me a remedy, becauſe there is but one, and becauſe it is unknown?"

VII. When it is replied, that it is the church which preſcribes the remedy, and that the magiſtrate only makes the application; he aſks, what church? that certainly, ſays he, which is at the magiſtrate's beck, which, without aſcending to the

the time of the Arians, he ſhews to have been the caſe ſo late as the beginning of the Reformation, when, under Harry the 8th, Edward the 6th, Mary and Elizabeth, the church veered about with the court, eſpouſing by turns, however contradictory, ſyſtems, which ſhews the magiſtrate to have been at the bottom not only of the application, but even preſcription.

I am,

Your humble ſervant,

LIBERTY.

LETTER XLIV.

To the Publiſher of the Middleſex Journal, *July* 25, 1769.

[*Continued.*]

SIR,

I. IT is objected, that leaving every one to himſelf in making a religious choice, would be bidding fair for an univerſal toleration. But what then? is the countenancing, at worſt, involuntary error not preferable to the promoting of hypocriſy or rebellion by ſeverity? If the experiment were made, a little time would ſhew which of the two is the more eligible. If what Mr. Marmontel, the author of Belizarius, ſays, "That an intollerant magiſtrate is the miniſter of envy, covetouſneſs, pride, ambition, hatred, or revenge; ſo far,

far, that if no profit attended prieſts' waring for heaven; if their zeal for truth was not expected to cruſh the foe, to raiſe themſelves upon his ruins, inrich them with his ſpoils, or put him out of their way to preferment, there ſcarce would be any noiſe about religion." If this, I ſay, be but true, the choice is ſoon made; for, as he obſerves, when the magiſtrate, from a ſpirit of tolerance, looks upon religious diſputes as beneath his notice, they die away by degrees. As price-fighting gladiators, who go to upon a full booth, ſhake hands, ſhould it be empty; ſo would it, ſays he, be with thoſe ſpiritual champions. This ſure were more adviſable than to be ever ſkirmiſhing: however, that my toleration is not without exception, will appear by the ſequel.

II. I am inclined to be of opinion with my Lord Shaftſbury, that if the pagan perſecuting emperors had uſed raillery inſtead of racks, they had been more ſucceſsful againſt Chriſtianity; nor can I ſee, but that mildneſs and lenity had been more proper to gain a due ſubmiſſion from the Iſraelites to their theocracy, or conciliate the reſpect of pagans thereto, than its great ſeverity, nor otherwiſe account for the frequent revolts of thoſe, than by attributing them to its extreme rigour, while the more crying failures and flagrant crimes of their pagan neighbours were overlooked, which made their condition to be envied; what elſe, but the great ſtrictneſs and awfulneſs of that diſpenſation, could the following extravagant propoſals be attributed to? "And they ſaid to Moſes, ſpeak thou unto us, and we ſhall hear; but let not God ſpeak with us, leaſt we die (Exod. xx. 19.) and they ſaid to Samuel, make unto us a king to judge us and fight our battles, like all other nations (1 Sam. viii. 19, &c.)."

III. To

III. To weigh things in the ſcales of human conjecture, which, I muſt own, is pure darkneſs and ignorance, compared to the knowledge of the Omniſcient, whoſe views are unſearchable; had it not been leſs revolting to have privately tranſplanted the inhabitants of Goſhen beyond the red ſea, without ſlaughtering the firſt born of the Egyptians, (Exod. xii. 29.) and overwhelming Pharaoh and his hoſt in the purſuit (Exod. xiv. 28.)? to have made the Jews drink their pulveriſed calf at Mount Sinai, (Exod. xxxii. 20.) without putting 23,000 of them to death by the hands of the Levites (Exod. xxxii. 28.)? To have got Korah, Dathan, and Abiram alone, ſwallowed up by the earth, (Numb. xvi. 32.) as authors of the ſedition, without killing the matter of 15,000? or, to enumerate no more examples, to have uſed expoſtulations and remonſtrances without ſlaying 24,000 for their debaucheries with the daughters of Moab (Numb. xxv. 9.)? But what is more ſtriking than all this is, the reaſon for which this ſlaughter has ſometimes been made, 15,070 of the Bethſhemites were ſlain, for but a piece of curioſity of peeping into the ark, (1 Kings xvi. 19.) and Ozam for but lending a hand to ſupport it when ready to tumble down (2 Kings, vi. 6.)

IV. To pretend, after ſuch precedents of exceſſive rigidity, but moſt undoubtedly juſt vengeance, and the following penal laws, beſides many more, enacted for reſtraining tranſgreſſions, viz. "Thou ſhalt ſmite the nations of the land, I ſhall give thee, and utterly deſtroy them; thou ſhalt make no covenant with them, nor ſhew any mercy unto them, neither ſhalt thou make marriages with them (Deut. vii. 2.). If thy brother, the ſon of thy mother, or thy ſon, or thy daughter, or the wife of thy boſom, or thy friend, which is as thine

thine own ſoul, intice thee ſecretly, ſaying, let us go and ſerve ſtrange gods, thou ſhalt ſtone him with ſtones, that he die (Deut. xiii. 6.) If there be found among you man or woman that hath gone after other gods, and worſhipped the ſun, moon, or any of the hoſt of heaven, thou ſhalt bring him forth, and ſtone him with ſtones till he die (Deut. xvii. 2.)" After this, I ſay, to pretend with Mr. Voltaire, in vindication of the Calas family, the Jew œconomy tolerant, would be to outface the height of evidence.

V. It is true, there are ſome paſſages importing, that Jews have tranſgreſſed theſe laws with impunity, ſuch as that where Stephen ſays, (Acts vii. 42.) that they had adored the hoſt of heaven, carried the tabernacle of Moloch, and ſtar of Remphan, in the deſert, that, where it is ſaid, (Deut. xii. 6.) when you come into the land, ſee you do not do what we do here to-day, every one as he liſts, that where Michas of Ephraim is ſaid to have erected an idol in his houſe, which was ſerved by a youth of the Levitical order (Judges xvii.); and, when in Dan, whither it was afterwards transferred, by the very grandſon of Moſes, who miniſtered as prieſt (Judges xviii. 30.); and, to mention no more, thoſe, where it is recorded, that Solomon, Jeroboam, Aza, and other kings, both of Iſrael and Judah, turned idolaters, and yet that all died of a natural death.

VI. But who could infer a toleration from all this? We may as well call a ceſſation of arms for burying the ſlain in a bloody engagement a ſolid peace, as this a toleration. From perjury, for inſtance, being overlooked in a country does it follow, it is there tolerated? If diſſenting teachers have ſometimes been winked at from the firſt

of

of Elizabeth, when not aſſiſting at the common prayer was made a forfeit of one ſhilling, a fine which was encreaſed on her twenty-third to 20s. per month, and impriſonment in default of payment, in three months after judgment given: on her twenty-ninth, to the forfeiture of all goods, and 2-3ds of one's eſtate for his life; and on her thirty-fifth, to impriſonment till he conformed, which, if not done in three months, was to be followed with the forfeiture of all his goods and chattels for ever, and of lands and tenements during life, and baniſhment, on pain of ſuffering death as a felon, ſhould he not depart at the time prefixed, or ever return again; or from the 14th and 17th of Charles II. when other penal laws came out againſt them, to the firſt of William III. If in that long period, I ſay, Non-conformiſts might be ſometimes winked at, who can pretend they were properly tolerated? Or can papiſts be reckoned ſo at this day, for the exerciſe of their, however treaſonable, religion, being perhaps every now and then connived at? By toleration is not meant every ſimple impunity, but authoritatively ſuch, or a juridical exemption from penalty; who could therefore conclude, from an immediate exemplary puniſhment not having regularly followed upon every act of idolatry amongſt the Jews, that, in ſpite of the above unrepealed proſcriptive laws of the Pentateuch, ſuch has been tolerated; eſpecially when in conſequence of the ſaid laws it was, that, beſides other examples, Elias made ſuch a ſlaughter of Baal's prophets (3 Kings, xviii. 40.)? It is therefore not upon the Jew diſpenſation I would ground my tolerating plan of religious ſpeculative opinions, but upon the more mild ſcheme of the goſpel; for which we have reaſon to think it has made room, as well as to this, as

to

to its ſymbolical uſages; and conſequently, that, inſtead of fire and faggot, argument is now to be the only means of conviction, and that conſcience is herein to be under no other than its own controul.

I am, Sir,

Your moſt humble Servant,

LIBERTY.

LETTER XLV.

To the Publiſher of the Middleſex Journal, *July* 27, 1769.

[*Continued.*]

SIR,

I. IS this not that right of private judgment, mentioned above, in aſſerting of which ſo much of proteſtant blood has been ſpilt? What can that liberty Chriſt purchaſed for us, ſo often inculcated in the New Teſtament, more properly imply than an emancipation from thoſe ſhackles, which, by rendering men bond ſlaves, excludes them from the inheritance of children? Or is this not the ſpirit of adoption, ſo often mentioned by St. Paul? What could Chriſt have more aptly meant, when he ſaid his kingdom was not of this world, than that, as he did not come to eſtabliſh it with the ſword, or any coercive means, to the prejudice of Cæſar, ſo he would have but volunteers thereto to belong?

II. His leſſons, whilſt in the fleſh, all breathed lenity, meekneſs, forbearance, and indulgence; witneſs the parable of the Prodigal Son, of whoſe father he gives us to underſtand himſelf was the ſymbol (Luke xv. 2.), as he was that of the ſhepherd, who finding his loſt ſheep, gladly hoiſted it home upon his ſhoulders (Luke xv. 5.), that of the huſbandman, who ordered the vintager, who came at the laſt hour, the ſame wages with thoſe who had borne the burden and heat of the day (Mat. xx. 12.), that of the compaſſionate Samaritan, who got the man, wounded by thieves, taken care of, whilſt the prieſt and levite ſuperciliouſly paſſed him by (Luke x. 30.); an example of univerſal benevolence, ever to be borne in mind by ſuch narrow-ſoul'd Chriſtians, as, in imitation of thoſe Jewiſh churchmen, would, in conferring favours, either give the preference to thoſe of their own perſuaſion; or, what is ſtill more unbearable, wholly exclude all others therefrom, on pretence that Paul exhorts (Gal. vi. 10.) to do good unto all men, eſpecially unto thoſe who are of the houſhold of faith, forgetting, this might be, not ſo much for their being ſuch, as that, conſidering their perſecuted ſtate, they might have ſtood more in need of relief, than the members of the then eſtabliſhed religion.

III. He forgave the ſinful woman (Luke vii. 37.) and diſmiſſed the adultereſs, after having confounded her accuſers, with a wiſdom not ſhort of Solomon's judgment (3 Kings, iii. 27.), with only a caution to ſin no more (John viii. 11.) What meekneſs has he not diſplayed upon being accoſted by the traitor Judas (Luke xxii. 48.)? Has he not ordered Peter to put up the ſword into its ſheath, ſaying, "they that uſe the ſword will periſh thereby (Mat. xxvi. 52.)?" Has he not reprimanded

primanded James and John for wanting him to give them leave to make fire come down from heaven upon the inhabitants of a Samaritan village, for refuſing to harbour him, ſaying, "ye know not what manner of ſpirit ye are of (Luke ix. 55.)?" In fine, did he not chearfully become the victim of God's wrath, kindled againſt the whole ſpecies?

IV. This, I fancy is ſufficient to ſhew that the Moſaic, if at all abrogated, muſt have been ſo, as much for exchanging its intolerant ſpirit for chriſtian meekneſs and benignity, as reforming the ſurfeiting groſſneſs of its ritual obſervances. I ſee no other inconvenience attending theſe being continued to the end of time, unleſs, perhaps, ſuch as the victim in ſome ſacrifices being burnt to aſhes, which might have ſerved good purpoſes in time of great dearth; whereas, an experience of about 1500 years abundantly evinced, how much more the endearing quality of *abba*, *father*, (Rom. viii. 15.) was like to prevail towards keeping a ſtiffnecked race within bounds, than that of a Sanhedrim, dooming them to be ſtoned or ſcourged to death.

V. God, indeed, upon the formation of the race, ſet out with a plan of toleration (Gen. iv. 7. and Eccl. xv. 17.); this being abuſed, ſo as to bring on the extinction of the whole race, to one family, by the deluge; ſucceeded, after a ſhort interval, that of intolerance, which being found ſtill ineffectual, recourſe was had to the original plan, but with more alluring indearments and inducements to a compliance with duty and a reciprocal love (Mat. ix. 13. and John xv. 13); that in the day of general reckoning the bulk of mankind ſhould have no plea left in behalf of their manifold prevarications, all poſſible means ſuita-

ble to their nature having been applied for their attachment to him, preferably to all created beings, and their own moſt darling paſſions, which ſeems to have been his main view in the whole of his œconomy, not ſo much for his own honour and glory, having been in all reſpects eſſentially *optimus maximus* from all eternity, as for imparting a glimmering of his felicity to them. Now that the Jew œconomy was long ſince aboliſhed needs, methinks, no better proof than that God, who is no reſpecter of perſons (Acts x. 34.) would have otherwiſe in the ſpace of near 1800 years, undeceived the world by ſome of thoſe wonders, whereby he ſo frequently checked the deviations of Jews.

VI. The cruel partiſans of intolerance, ever bent upon ſtifling the natural feelings of humanity, and delighting in ſetting people, like ſo many bull-dogs, at variance, leave no ſtone unturned to find in even the goſpel-ſcheme a ſanction for the barbarity of their flinty hearts. From the parable of the king, who got thoſe demoliſhed who had maltreated the meſſengers ſent to invite them to his ſon's nuptials, and one of the gueſts to be caſt into outward darkneſs, where there was wailing and gnaſhing of teeth (Mat. xxii.) they would infer its being warrantable. But is all this not relative to the kingdom of heaven, where no quarter is given to ſuch as ſtay out for unexpiated crimes, eſpecially rejecting the goſpel, which is there alluded to, and where nothing unſeemly is to enter? Or, ſhould this be applied to the church, as countenancing her perſecuting for conſcience-ſake, the conſequence would be, that from the parable of the artful ſteward (Luke xvi. 1.) fraud and deceit muſt likewiſe be allowed her, and hence

it

it is, that parables may be derived as well from unjuſtifiable as juſtifiable facts.

VII. From another parable, where thoſe invited to ſupper, excuſing themſelves, the man of the houſe orders his ſervant to go out quickly into the ſtreets and lanes of the city, and compel the poor, maimed, lame, and blind to come in (Luke xiv.) they would infer the ſame concluſion. This, I muſt own, appears to relate to the church, there being no mention made of the kingdom of heaven. But muſt it needs ſignify corporal or phyſical compulſion, and not rather moral, derived from wonderous facts, and convincing arguments, borrowed from prophecy, and the intrinſic merit of the goſpel-ſcheme?

VIII. They likewiſe make a handle of theſe expreſſions of Chriſt: "if he neglect to hear the church, let him be to thee as a heathen and publican (Mat. xviii. 17.). If any man come unto me, and hate not his father, mother, wife, children, brethren, ſiſters, nay his own life, he cannot be my diſciple (Luke xiv. 26.)." Alſo of his having curſed the fig-tree, and its withering thereupon (Mark xi. 21.); of his having turned the merchants out of the temple, ſent a legion of devils out of the Energumenus into the ſwine, &c. But what is there in all this that authoriſes perſecution or intolerance? If I am to look upon a heathen and publican with an evil eye, and deteſt their profeſſion and ways, to give the preference to Chriſt, before all thoſe, and even myſelf, who would ſuggeſt maxims contrary to his, and thruſt out of God's houſe ſuch as profane it, does it follow, ſanguinary laws may be made for their extirpation? or even leſs ſevere corporally penal for their correction? If Chriſt had meant any ſuch thing, is it not likely that, having the

power in his own hands, he had ſet the example? or is the inſtance of the fig-tree, or ſwine to be made a precedent for demoliſhing or tormenting the human ſpecies?

IX. Some will have it, the delivering over the inceſtuous Corinthian to Satan, a puniſhment leſs eligible than death itſelf, though but for the deſtruction of the fleſh, that the ſpirit might be ſaved in the day of the Lord (1 Cor. v. 5.), to be a ſufficient warrant for perſecution; not conſidering, that, to make this of weight, the delinquent ſhould be viſibly poſſeſſed or tortured by Satan, what we never ſee now to be the caſe, as it ſeems to have been then; or, at leaſt, that a mere expulſion from the ſociety of the faithful ſhould be the conſequence of this church-cenſure, without, as is cuſtomary, impriſonment, and a diſability for all judicial acts, which we do not find St. Paul ever meant to inflict.

X. Others would ground their pretenſions upon the diſmal fate of Ananias and Saphira, for having lied unto God, and tempted the ſpirit of the Lord (Acts v.); and ſay, it is far better a few ſhould be cut off, than that a whole flock ſhould be infected with the dreadful contagion of ſuch a diſſembling prevarication, a conſequence equally, nay more, to be apprehended from all religious errors. But who does not ſee that, by confronting this tranſaction with the practiſe of the preſent times, when lies are only puniſhed by their own infamy, and even perjury only by fines, impriſonment, pillory, or tranſportation at moſt, this example of ſeverity is more to be admired with aſtoniſhment, than rigorouſly adhered to?

XI. But ſhould I allow examples of ſeverity to be alone good proofs, that a kind of intolerance reigned in the apoſtolic days; is a conſequence from

from Chriſt and his immediate ſucceſſors to our preſent ſet of church-governors to be reckoned fair? Are theſe indued with the gift of miracles, that ſo prevalent argument as then rendered all non-acquieſcence inexcuſable? Can their teſtimony be reckoned equally unexceptionable, when, as was obſerved from Mr. Locke, it loſes of its weight for every remove? Whence it is that hear-ſays are never received as abſolute proofs in courts of judicature: to juſtify the practiſe of intolerance, there ſhould therefore have been a poſitive injunction thereof laid upon all poſterity by the goſpel, as it was by the Jew-œconomy.

I am, Sir,

Your humble Servant,

LIBERTY.

This not appearing in the uſual time, I ſent the following.

Auguſt 5, 1769.

SIR,

YOUR having favoured me with the inſertion of one letter a week regularly, ſince my admiſſion to your correſpondence till the 25th ult. makes me apprehend mine of 27th ditto is not come to hand, as I preſume it otherwiſe would have appeared. Your letting me know how the matter ſtands, would much oblige

Your's, *&c.*

LIBERTY.

No anſwer being made to this, I ſent the following:

Auguſt 10, 1769.

SIR,

AS I cannot ſuppoſe both my letters miſcarried, it gives me ſome concern no notice has been taken of either. If you mean to vacate your religious corner, or for ſome overſight, diſmiſs me therefrom, is what, in juſtice to injured innocence, I may, without offence, be allowed to aſk; though perhaps not the reaſons that might have influenced your determination, which, I own, may be made a myſtery to a correſpondent upon mere courteſy, ſuch as your hitherto much obliged humble ſervant,

LIBERTY.

ANSWER. *Auguſt* 15, 1769.

LIBERTY *has our thanks for his many favours. His papers have been miſlaid by former editors; but as the conduct of this paper is now in different hands, if he thinks proper to let us hear from him again, he may depend for the future of meeting with treatment due to the gentleman and ſcholar.*

Hereupon I tranſcribed the letter, ſent it the 17*th, and after waiting, what I thought a reaſonable time, ſent the following:*

Auguſt 28, 1769.

SIR,

YOUR having ſignified the 15th inſtant, that my letter of the 27th ult. was miſlaid by your former editor, and that I might expect in future a treatment due to the gentleman and ſcholar, I repeated ſaid letter the 17th. My ſurprize at its not having appeared ſince is the greater, as I can entertain no ſuſpicion of your word of honour,

honour, and that, of ſome ſcores of my letters by the penny poſt, I never knew one miſcarry. Pray let me know what the matter is: I read ſaid letter over and over, without diſcovering any thing that could give offence. A perſon of your free and open principles muſt be ſenſible, a poſitive diſmiſſion were by far leſs irkſome than a ſtate of ſuſpence to any patron, ſuch as I reckon myſelf to be in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, of

LIBERTY.

No anſwer being made hereto, the world is left to judge, if this anti-miniſterial paper has not been ſet on foot, rather for retrieving a wrecked fortune, by its ſale, which he imagined, on ſecond thoughts, might be damped by religious inſertions, or ſome ſuch ſelfiſh view, the very reproach it makes to the tools of the adminiſtration, by branding, for inſtance, a rival paper with the opprobrious epithet of *Ledger of Slavery*, than, as is ſo loudly trumpeted, ſtrenuouſly engaging, what I ſhall believe, when convinced of the Little Carpenter's diſintereſted zeal (See *P. S.* 155.) in the glorious cauſe of Liberty; and, having no other reſourſe left, if ſuch uſage may not ſuffice to apologiſe for my applying without a medium, and addreſſing the following letters to the Public.

LET-

LETTER XLVI.

I. WHEN ſcripture fails the intolerants have recourſe to a parity of reaſon: if high treaſon, ſay they, againſt an earthly king, be puniſhable even with death, why may diſobedience to the revealed will of the king of kings not be liable to privations, excluſions, &c. the only grievance complained of by the Non-conforming brethren? I muſt own the argument would be of force, had it not been for the above pleas in people's excuſe for their ſuppoſed erroneous opinions, more deſerving therefore of compaſſion than chaſtiſement, that the one caſe affects the public tranquility, by people's flying in the face of authority, which both the civil and eccleſiaſtical magiſtrates are warranted to look to; whereas the other may no more concern it than the ſyſtems relating to the perpetual motion or the philoſopher's ſtone, and eſpecially, that, God, being all-ſufficient to vindicate his own cauſe, may be jealous of our meddling withal, unleſs, as in the Jew diſpenſation, commiſſioned thereto. The defence of one's country, and combating its foes would ſeem warrantable by the law of reaſon: yet we find Jews diſproved for attempting the thing, uncommiſſioned (1 Mac. v. 62.). Why ſhould a deputation not be as neceſſary for the vindication of God's honour, as the functions of his miniſtry? and yet this were illegal without (2 Chr. xxvi. 18.): What greater affront could be put upon the revealed ſyſtem of Chriſtianity, than the treating its founder as an impoſtor? Yet, this not diſturbing the public

public peace, we don't find the aſſertors thereof complain of hardſhips, even in ſome bigotted ſtates; why therefore ſhould the abettors of other ſpeculative opinions not be left to the dictates of their own conſciences, rather than be worried into a darling ſyſtem of an only ſaving religion, under the cloak of avenging God's honour? where the words of an uninlightened pagan (Plutarch) in oppoſition to this plea in favour of inquiſitorial proceedings, may ſeem very appoſite. "Is that, ſays he, a method of adoring the ſupreme being? What a diſhonour is reflected on the divinity by ſuppoſing him to thirſt for human blood; to be greedy of ſlaughter, and even capable of exacting or being pleaſed with ſuch ſacrifices? If the Typhons and the Giants had conquered heaven, could they have eſtabliſhed upon earth more abominable ſacrifices?"

II. This, indeed, I find agreed to by all perſons of moderation; but it is not ſo with regard to the admiſſion of Non-conformiſts to civil or eccleſiaſtical preferments, which the eſtabliſhed clergy for the moſt part, would by no means have conferred without the uſual teſts. Impunity they own in juſtice every one's due, until convicted of a crime, ſuch as non-conformity can never with any degree of certainty be proved, unleſs by the ſearcher of hearts, who alone can ſound their ſincerity: but favours, ſuch as promotions, are of their own nature gratuitous, and wholly ſo lodged in the breaſt of the donor, that his beſtowing them upon ſuch perſons and terms as he in his wiſdom may think meet, ſhould never give cauſe to murmurs, provided the main intent of the collation be anſwered. Is thine eye evil, ſays Chriſt (Mat. xx. 15.), becauſe I am good?

good? Where there is no right, there can be no injuſtice, nor, of courſe, reaſon to complain.

III. Mr. Locke himſelf, however ſtrenuous he might be for Non-conformiſts, has in his letters pleaded for no more than an exemption from penalty and coaction, though he ſurvived the toleration-act the matter of fifteen years, and in that time publiſhed moſt of his works. So far from it, that, ſpeaking of the power of excommunication, which, without being attended by force or compulſion, he allows the church over Non-conformiſts, he has the following words, "The whole force of excommunication conſiſts only in this, that the reſolution of the ſociety (church) in that reſpect, being declared, the union that was between the body and ſome non-conforming member comes thereby to be diſſolved, and, that relation ceaſing, the participation of ſome certain things, which the ſociety communicated to its members, and unto which no man has any civil right, comes alſo to ceaſe; for there is no civil injury done unto the excommunicated perſon by the church miniſters refuſing him that bread and wine, in the celebration of the Lord's ſupper, which was not bought with his, but other mens money."

IV. Now it ſhould ſeem by the argument, that, church preferments, not being of their own acquiſition or procurement, Non-conformiſts, far from complaining, ſhould not have the face, in defiance of the moſt glaring inconſiſtency, to expreſs their jealouſy for being excluded from livings, which are well known to have been, for the moſt part, of popiſh eſtabliſhment; when this is their chief reaſon for rejecting our church ceremonies.

V. They

V. They own, indeed, that ſuch rewards and emoluments, which cannot otherwiſe be had than by conforming, often put as great *force* upon many mens minds, as the halters of Tyburn, or the faggots of Smithfield: but they pretend, it muſt be likewiſe owned, ſuch daſtardly worldlings are unworthy of their maſter, who would have them be children of providence (Mat. vi. 25.), and himſelf the portion of their inheritance (Pſal. xvi. 5.), expecting here no other hire than the ox that treadeth out the corn (1 Cor. ix. 9.), their daily food from hand to mouth (Mat. x. 10.), towards which purpoſe, they fancy, every member of their own ſociety ready in their different capacities, to contribute their mite, ſo as to unable them to live as much above want, as the apoſtles: wherefore it is, that, to put them the more effectually above the temptation of aſpiring to thoſe fat livings, at the expence of conſcience, thoſe moderators would have their brotherhood paſs into a law ſome regulation analogous to the 33d canon of the eſtabliſhed church, reſpecting the title of ſuch as are to be made miniſters of the word.

VI. Nor can they form any tolerable advantagous idea of the religion of pariſhioners, documented by incumbents of oppoſite religious principles. They would turn out a mere hotch-pot of Trinitarians, Anti-trinitarians, Arminians, Gomariſts, &c. by adopting theſe contradictory ſyſtems by turns, as they ſhould chance to have the ſcriptures expounded to them by different hands, which, to the great ſcandal of their neighbours, would probably terminate in the utter contempt of their ſacred inſtitutes. And hence it is, that,

to

to make covenanters look upon things with a more impartial eye, they would have them put a while in the Conformiſts' place, to ſee, if they would reliſh better to have *ſubſcribers* given them to hold forth in their meetings, than their American brethren would epiſcopalians, with even all the ſecurity they could expect for a reciprocal tolerance, and an indiſcriminate advancement, without any other reſpect, than to perſonal merit and abilities.

VII. Theſe arguments, I muſt own, are ſpecious, but more becoming Non-conformiſts, as reaſons for ſubmitting to their humiliating ſtate of penury, than glutted churchmen, whom an exhortation to apoſtolic frugality and lowlineſs, would ſurely ill behove. That they are likewiſe ill-grounded appears from this ſingle conſideration, that even the ſhare of him who tarrieth with the baggage, ſhould, by the law, be equal with his who goes down to the battle (1 Sam. xxx. 24.); much more ſo then, when both fight alike. Now that this has been the caſe with Non-conformiſts is plain from hiſtory; and that it is ſo at this day, from their ſuperior abhorrence of Rome and her tyranny, confeſſed by the very papiſts. Why therefore ſhould they not equally partake of her ſpoils, which, if not laviſhed with ſuch profuſion upon court minions, and divided with œconomy, would ſuffice, to ſpeak within bounds, for double the number of claimants, without any freſh contributions; which, I acknowledge ſhould be at the diſpoſal of the ſocieties, where they are levied: So that toleration ſhould extend not only as to impunity, but even grants, at leaſt, of the popiſh booty to all Non-conformiſts, coeval to the reformation; not to thoſe ſects ſtarted up

ſince,

ſince, which had no hand in its eſtabliſhment; for though, to appearance, equally well affected, they came too late to ſhare in the ſpoil.

VIII. It is true, that all regular ſocieties preſcribe conditions, ſuch as, for inſtance, the orthodoxy of the clergy in our preſent caſe, for partaking of their privileges and emoluments. But is ſubſcribing to articles of faith, or a mode of worſhip of human invention, the only teſt of this orthodoxy? or ſhould it not ſuffice, upon true proteſtant principles, that the churchman declare, "the ſcripture containeth all things neceſſary to ſalvation? that whatever is not read therein cannot be enjoined as ſuch by the church? that he ſincerely means to ſtudy it with an honeſt mind? endeavour to underſtand it in its true ſenſe? and inſtruct the people therein to the beſt of his knowledge and abilities?" The 6th article of religion ſeems indeed to think it ſufficient for being made neceſſary to ſalvation, that a propoſition may be *proved* by ſcripture: But, conſidering how little theological inferences are likely to bid fair for an univerſal aſſent, to this I cannot agree. Nay, he who from ſcripture would infer the warrantableneſs of impoſing ſuch confeſſions of faith, ſhould, methinks, advert, he may as well plead for popiſh traditions, equally recommended therein, as for a *form of doctrine, or of ſound words*, which are pretended to give a ſanction to unſcriptural ſyſtematical confeſſions; if our own controvertiſts underſtand by *tradition* ſome part or other of the ſcripture, I don't ſee why we ſhould not ſay as much of the other expreſſions.

IX. Dr. Fuller is ſomewhat arch upon the patrons of ſuch deductions; "as love, ſays he, doth deſcend, and men doat moſtly on their grand-children, ſo theſe are indulgent to the deductions

ductions of their deductions, and conſequential inferences to the 7th generation, making them all to be of the foundation, though in fact they be ſcarce of the building of religion."

X. As to what is gibingly ſaid of Non-conforming ſqueamiſhneſs in regard to church ceremonies; not livings, even when both are originally alike popiſh: It ſhould be conſidered, neceſſity may exculpate the one, when no ſuch can plead for the other: Was that not what excuſed David and followers for eating of the ſhew-bread? (1 Sam. xxi. 6.) whereas we no where can find, the uſe of high places, groves, or any pagan idolatrous rites ever allowed to Jews?

XI. As to the hotch-pot argument, I ſhall only ſay, the evil cannot be ſo great, when the contrariety is in ſpeculative opinions; not practical, in which all proteſtant expounders, however otherwiſe jarring, are generally agreed. It is true, ſpeculative might have ſometimes ſo degenerated into practical, as to have proved fatal to the repoſe of the community; but this, if I miſtake not, was the fruit of a miſtaken zeal, founded upon ſome of the arguments here ſolved, or of an ill judged ambition of out-ſhining others by procuring a greater number of followers by other means than fair argument, which, if the only countenanced by thoſe in power, had never had the evil tendency. Nor, in fact, do I ſee why, upon this principle, the proſpect of a peaceable cohabitation of even Jews, Mahometans, Chriſtians, nay Atheiſts, with their numerous ſects, may not be as promiſing at this day, as that of the numerous brood of Platoniſts, Pythagorians, Academiſts and Pyrrhonians of old. Or do we read in hiſtory any remarkable confuſion following

ing upon the liberty of preaching what every one pleaſed, granted in Tranſylvania in 1561? Or what greater miſchief could enſue from hence, than from the expoſing in a public market, where the venders rarely diſagree, or a victualler's ſhop, a variety of proviſions to ſuit our different taſtes?

LIBERTY.

LETTER XLVII.

I. MR. *Locke*, indeed, excepts the Atheiſts, as promiſes, covenants, oaths, and other bonds of ſociety can have no hold on them, and that they can have no claim to a toleration in religion, whereof they have none. But I can't ſee why the common ties of ſociety, ſo far, eſpecially, as relates to the nature and fitneſs of things, though not indeed in compliance to a ſuperintending will of a ſovereign ruler, ſhould not appear as ſacred and inviolate to a decrier of a Deity, as to that of ſome of his eſſential attributes, ſuch as many Deiſts are, who, however, far from being thus proſcribed, are the favourites of the age; nor why any material difference ſhould be made, ſo far as relates to tolerance, betwixt denying a God, and making him a cypher, ſince the ſeventh day of the creation, by denying his moral attributes, as Lord Bolingbroke does; as it can ſcarce be doubted, but that the generality of mankind may be as uncapable of comprehending not only the arguments for proving a Deity *a priori*, but even the chain of natural cauſes, at the end of

which he is pretended to be indiſpenſibly ſeen, as they may be to underſtand many reaſons uſed to aſcertain ſaid attributes. Now I appeal to any one's own experience, which may be daily made in this infidel age, if a Deiſt may not be as upright, honeſt, and kind a friend, neighbour, and patriot, and, of courſe, as tolerable as either Chriſtian, Jew, or Mahometan: Why then may an Atheiſt not? Or if a Deiſt may be morally virtuous, without the belief of heaven or hell, why may the Atheiſt not without that of a God?

II. Nor do I ſee why the very beauty of virtue, excluſive of every other conſideration, ſhould not be a ſufficient incitement to promote a ſocial life; for, ſuppoſing the world to have been uſhered into exiſtence, and now governed by blind fate, and mankind to be as literally mortals as the brute creation, were ſobriety not preferable to intemperance? a competent mediocrity to a reſtleſs and unbounded ambition? checking the ſallies of inordinate inclinations and paſſions, to giving them the reins, in contradiction to reaſon, &c. not only as to the happineſs of thoſe we herd with, but even our own enjoyment, both in reſpect to our worldly poſſeſſions, health, contentment, and peace of mind? which the very votaries of Rome muſt own; for if ſhe has decreed againſt Baius, that all the actions of unbelievers are not ſinful, nor the virtues of the philoſophers vicious, why ſhould thoſe of the Atheiſts be ſo? See Biſhop Hoadly on Dr. Atterbury's Sermon concerning the advantages of virtue, with regard to the preſent life.

III. As to his forfeiting a right to toleration in religion, for his having none, it is begging the queſtion: If an erroneous notion of God's attri-

butes

butes be not inconſiſtent with religion, why ſhould that of his exiſtence be? Moreover, to give up the nominal queſtion, ſhould this be called a toleration, not in religion, but opinion, ſuch as that of the natural poſſibility of the philoſopher's ſtone, or the perpetual motion, it were as much as I require.

IV. And, indeed, that the preference, as to this, ſhould be given the Atheiſt, before ſome Deiſts eſpecially, appears from hence, that people may eaſily authoriſe their unjuſtices, for inſtance, upon the want of the oppoſite moral attribute in God, the ſame as the Libertine in Terence, engaged in a very unjuſtifiable purſuit, and happening to ſee a picture, repreſenting a known ſtory of Jupiter, by an untoward caſuiſtry, thus argued the matter within himſelf: If the great Jupiter could not deny himſelf an indulgence of this kind, *ego homuncio hoc non facerem?* ſhall I, a compound of fleſh and blood, pretend to a virtue, which the father of the gods and men could not? Whereas to Atheiſm no ſuch evil tendency can be aſcribed; ſo far from it, that a celebrated Holſteiner of the laſt century, by name Knuzen, has blended the notions of natural religion, the ideas of *honeſtum*, the impreſſions of reaſon, and the inward light of conſcience, with the moſt conſummate Atheiſm.

Nor do I find Diagoras the Atheiſt charged with having been deficient in any of theſe points: And hence it is, that, in juſtice to the deſervedly for wiſdom renowned Athenians, I reckon their rigorous proſecution of him, more the work of the blind vulgar, ſuperſtitiouſly devoted to the honour of their gods, than of their enlightened philoſophers.

V. It is ſtrange Mr. Locke, beſides the impracticability of making mankind all of a mind, with regard to ſpeculative opinions, would lay down ſo precarious a rule for toleration, as, that whatever is lawful in the common-wealth, cannot be prohibited in the church, whence he concludes, if I may kill my calf at home, I cannot be hindered by the magiſtrate to ſacrifice it in church; for I would aſk if the church may be allowed a proper place for epithalamiums, and the full accompliſhment of the hymeneal rites, becauſe they are allowed in the common-wealth? Sure what is allowed on ſome occaſions, may not be ſo on all. I preſume Mr. Locke would never pretend with Diogenes the Cynic, that, in defiance of that natural ſhame we are all impreſſed with in this reſpect, whatever is done in private may juſtifiably be ſo in public. And as the circumſtance of place alters the morality of an action, ſo does the motive it is animated withal. Pray would a Quaker and a Churchman, addreſſing his majeſty with their hats on, be looked on in the ſame light, and equally ſufferable at court? Or ſhould Mr. Locke not have reaſoned thus of the revival of bloody victims in church, and ſlaughtering of beaſts, to ſupport a family at home?

Moreover, if the common-wealth be a rule to the church, many things, of their own nature indifferent, being introduced there, may ſurely be ſo here, what he, however, denies elſewhere to be allowable: but incoherence is the natural conſequence of prejudice, a foible not always beneath the greateſt geniuſes.

VI. But, to be particular in the diſcernment of religious opinions, the *ſpeculative* are ſaid to be thoſe, which, ſhould they prove erroneous, could hurt but ſuch as entertain them, and that by their for-

forfeiting heaven, ſhould their ignorance be culpable; ſuch as, that there is in God but one perſon, waſhing a babe avails him not, a bit of bread becomes the body of Chriſt, by certain words being breathed thereon, &c. Admoniſhments and arguments may here be available to convince the underſtanding; but not coercive means, which, far from enlightening and rendering it pliable, ſtiffens it in proportion to their forcibleneſs; whence it is, that they anſwer no other purpoſe than that of refractorineſs or hypocriſy; whereas the former, if managed with moderation, have ſuch ſalutary effects, that the inhibition thereof were the worſt ſort of intolerance. Practical, on the contrary, have a tendency to hurt the members of the common-wealth, either in their property, liberty, health or life. Here violence may interfere, as the chief purpoſe of magiſtracy, and the legiſlature is to preſerve each one in the inviolate poſſeſſion of theſe bleſſings (Rom. xiii. 4.).

VII. Should it be ſaid, that, though violent means are more apt to revolt than convince thoſe they immediately affect, yet it may not be ſo with their poſterity, who may become, in time, as zealous, as had they the ſtrongeſt conviction: I anſwer, all this may be true, and exemplified in the eſtabliſhment of Mahometiſm, whoſe votaries are as zealous, as had it not been propagated by the ſword, but the cleareſt argument: But what then? Is an act of cruelty warrantable that good may come on't? If ſo, Chriſt's crucifixion was not chargeable upon Caiphas, who prophetically declared, that one man, however unconvicted, ſhould rather die, than a whole nation periſh (John xi. 50.). Or may one perſon invade the property of another, that his poſterity, ignorant

of the uſurpation, may one day, in the way of preſcription, *bona fide*, poſſeſs the ſame?

VIII. It may be likewiſe ſaid by the intolerants, that, were all to be left to the umpirage of argument, diſputes never would ceaſe. Very like; but is the caſe not ſo now, that other ſteps are taken, to the manifeſt detriment of people's peace, both of body and ſoul? Whereas, by giving a free ſcope to argument, no more ill blood would probably be made, than is by the Robinhood Society; and very likely it would appear in the end where the truth lies, there being no properer means of detecting ſophiſtry than argumentation, which, therefore, if indulged with freedom, would bring its wiles to light, and render its reign leſs durable. But ſhould this never be the happy effect, after taking ſuch ſteps as are beſt ſuited for diſpelling intellectual darkneſs, God, we may preſume, whoſe mercy is infinite, would, on the laſt day, make allowances for involuntary error; or, being no reſpecter of perſons, diſplay ſuch wonders as he has indulged Jews with, for opening the eyes of the whole ſpecies, whilſt here, to the knowledge of every neceſſary truth. But ſuppoſing neither the one nor the other could be hoped for; what then? As it is not ſo much the conduciveneſs of tolerance to people's eternal welfare, as the good of ſociety, I am here canvaſſing.

LETTER XLVIII.

I. A Gentleman, who figured ſome time ſince in a news-paper, under the title of *Real Freethinker*, eſtabliſhed a maxim, as evident, he pretends, as any propoſition in Euclid, viz. *Truth, if given fair play, will ever be an overmatch for falſhood*, upon which the toleration of the very Atheiſts is not only allowable, but even adviſable. It is true, from his diſingenuous overlooking in his whole pamphlet the argument urged by his antagoniſt Anti-papiſta, May 3, 1766, from virtue not being always an overmatch for vice, he ſeems diffident of his axiom, which, by the bye, would vacate the neceſſity of Chriſt's miſſion, the end of which was, in a great meaſure, to eſtabliſh truth, long overpowered, and almoſt ſtifled by the groſſeſt of errors; but it will always conclude againſt him as to this, until he has either retracted, or explained it of ſelf-evident truths, or, if diſputable, not in this life, where we grope in the dark, but in that which is to come, where we ſhall ſee things as they really are.

II. Hence it is to be obſerved, that ſuch as profeſs any practically pernicious principles, ſuch as Mr. Locke ſhews to be the caſe with papiſts, have no reaſon to complain, ſhould they be crampt in the free uſe of argument, in ſupport not only of thoſe, but even any held by them of a ſpeculative nature. What ſufficient ſecurity could be given that theſe, being once eſtabliſhed by argu-

ment, the practical would not likewiſe gradually creep in? Who could take upon him to ſay, that tranſubſtantiation, and other ſpeculative points of popery, being once introduced, the king-killing, depoſing, &c. doctrines would not follow? Woeful experience has, to our coſt, often proved this apprehenſion but too well grounded.

III. But as neither their practical nor theoretical would ever ſtand any chance of obtaining in this enlightened age and realm, by dint of argument, it is great pity they ſhould not be indulged with the free uſe of it, and their form of worſhip, to prevent their propagating in the dark, on pretence of their having no other means left, what they would then be forced to diſavow in the face of the ſun, to wit, that the maſs alone would, for inſtance, be an over-balance to all the weight of proteſtant arguments, founding themſelves herein upon a declaration of Mr. Knox, "That one maſs was more frightful to him than 10,000 armed enemies, landed in any part of the realm."

IV. Nor do I imagine, whatever it may be with their worſhip, they would avail themſelves of the privilege of arguing, unleſs, as a ſenſible thus tolerating gentleman, ſigned an *Areopagite*, in the Ledger of the 1ſt of laſt December, has it, to their own confuſion, by expoſing their dull clumſy details, and the benefit of thouſands, who would profit by the exhibition of ſuch ſtuff.

So accuſtomed are they to clancular doings, that the light is dazzling to them; inſomuch, that they are ſcarce ever known to practiſe but upon the illiterate, and that, rather by aſperſing the Reformation and its votaries, than the proper management of any article in debate, witneſs the com-

mon run of their proſelites, and the motives of their conviction, from reading the legends of their ſaints' lives, from their children being cured of the hooping-cough, by drinking popiſh conſecrated wine, the pageantry of the popiſh worſhip, &c. which no more prove the truth of their religion, than my being a-kin to the grand ſeignor, from our having each of us two elbows.

V. Notwithſtanding my invitation to them for ſtanding forth in vindication of ſome arguments urged by their choice advocates, has one of them appeared? The Printer of the Ledger has done as much himſelf, the 12th of April, 1766, in the following manner: "If this correſpondent will fix upon any one point to diſcuſs, and ſtick to it, this paper will be open to controverſy on ſo fair a footing;" and yet, in imitation of the author of Cardinal Pole's life, the *Freethinker* only amuſed the Public with the pretended ſeverities, prevarications, and miſrepreſentations of proteſtants, without entering into the merits of a ſingle controverted point, and, what is ſtill more provoking, he, papiſt like, diſingenuouſly ſuppreſſed theſe words in his pamphlet. But, ſhould I miſtake their confidence and abilities, the moſt effectual means of making me ſenſible on't is the offering myſelf a candidate for their church, with the proviſo, that after I have compleated my pacific plan, they will, through the channel of ſome public paper, beat me out of my own by dint of fair argument.

VI. But ſhould it be ſaid, the moderation of this gentleman and brethren is the effect, not of their diſtruſt of their own abilities or cauſe, but of their prudence and peaceable temper, to avoid giving offence to government, which, in revenge,

venge, might be induced to oppreſs their profeſſion the more. It muſt be owned ſuch conduct, tho' a very proper ſymptom of the human policy, the Athenian artiſans were actuated by (Acts xix. 28.), is yet but untowardly ſuch of a Chriſtian ſpirit. Had the apoſtles not the courage, when brought before the council, boldly to declare, they ought to obey God rather than man (Acts v. 29.)? What progreſs had the goſpel been like to make in ſuch daſtardly hands? Or was it not this fervency of zeal for propagating truth, which chiefly ſtocked the calendar both of Rome and Proteſtants with the names of thoſe champions, who ſtaked their lives for what they apprehended the Chriſtian cauſe, whoſe blood proved the ſeed of a hundred fold crop? Thoſe popiſh champions muſt, therefore, have a diffidence of their cauſe being that of chriſtianity, of their abilities to ſupport the ſame, be convinced God's orders ſhould, in good policy, give way to man's, or, at leaſt, that the duty of propagating that has already ceaſed. We cannot otherwiſe account for their remiſſneſs herein: they may chuſe which ſide they will; the one or the other to me ſeems unavoidable.

But what evinces, beſides, their being ſtimulated by ſelfiſh prudential reaſons, is, that, to court popularity, they are ſaid, like our modern ſectaries, to delight in holding forth, and, oracle like, haranguing the vulgar, ſo eaſily made a prey to the moſt barefaced impoſtors; and yet will not face an enemy when thus ſolemnly provoked. To prove themſelves diſintereſted, they ſhould be leſs tenacious of their real immunities, and to make believe they are peaceably inclined, inſtead of hacknied and beaten maxims of godlineſs, whereof

whereof their audience are often as well aware as themſelves; their theme ſhould ſavour more of univerſal benevolence and humanity, by diſclaiming thoſe ſelf-tolerating, ſelf-ſaving, king-dethroning, &c. tenets, fathered on their church.

VII. The year following another of thoſe popiſh advocates (a hay-maker), being told that the fourth Lateran council had excommunicated ſuch lords as ſhould neglect to extirpate heretics, and ordered their territories to be made over to ſuch Catholics as would, after abſolving their vaſſals from their fealty, briefly anſwers, that the 3d canon is ſpurious; although it was in conſequence thereof, that ſo many crowned heads have been depoſed, down from the Emperor Frederick the 2d. who was ſo by Innocent the 4th, 1245, to James the 1ſt. who was ſo by Paul the 5th, and that we may as well deny the authenticneſs of the famous 21ſt canon, touching Eaſter communion, or any other of the 70 there made, as of this.

VIII. A third of the ſame year (Anti-draco), unable to deny ſome practically pernicious principles to be eſpouſed by Rome, advanced, that Engliſh papiſts diſclaim ſuch; not conſidering, that to ſhift principles at will, beſides renouncing Rome's ſway, would, of all ſyſtems, be the moſt dangerous to a religious ſociety, which would never be long upheld, unleſs the members thereof could thoroughly depend upon each other's ſteadineſs and integrity.

LIBERTY.

LET-

LETTER XLIX.

I. A Fourth of the ſame year offers himſelf as an apologiſt for Catholics, without being acquainted with the firſt elements of popery. He ſays, Catholics receive the books, our 6th religious article calls apocryphal, for the inſtruction of life, but not for building faith thereupon; though the council of Trent, without any diſtinction, receives them like the canonical (Seſſ. 3. decr. de can. Scrip.); and that two only ſacraments were inſtituted by Chriſt, though the ſame council anathematizes ſuch as would deny all or any of them to be ſo (Seſſ. 7. Can. 1.). Had he, in compliment to Proteſtants, thus modified things, as for himſelf, very well; but to anſwer for his church, to whoſe creed he was an utter ſtranger, muſt argue the moſt conſummate aſſurance.

II. He and the haymaker, and indeed all the popiſh divines, offer it as a plea for Rome's not being ſanguinary, that, after convicting a perſon of hereſy, for inſtance, ſhe delivers him over to the ſecular arm, without imbruing her own hands in his blood; though they perhaps could not ſay, which ſavours more of cruelty, to ſtab a man to the heart, or get him caſt into a den of wild beaſts.

III. The leſſon Mr. Locke gives to churchmen of all denominations, I ſhould much rather recommend, as ſavouring more of Chriſtian lenity: "Oh! ſays he, that our eccleſiaſtical orators, of every ſect, would apply themſelves, with all the ſtrength of argument that they are able, to the

con

confounding of mens errors, but let them ſpare their perſons; let them not ſupply their want of reaſons with inſtruments of force, which belong to another juriſdiction, and do ill become a churchman's hands. Let them not call in the magiſtrate's authority to the aid of their eloquence and learning, leſt, perhaps, whilſt they pretend only love for truth; this, their intemperate zeal, breathing nothing but fire and ſword, betray their ambition, and ſhew, that what they deſire is temporal dominion; for it will be very difficult to perſuade men of ſenſe, that he, who with dry eyes, and ſatisfaction of mind, can deliver his brother unto the executioner, to be burnt alive, does ſincerely and heartily concern himſelf to ſave that brother from the flames of hell in the world to come." His holineſs therefore, to convince people of ſenſe, he does not thirſt after Proteſtant blood, ſhould get the perſecutors for conſcience inſerted in *bulla cænæ*, and ſubjected to the ſame cenſure with the violaters of church immunity.

IV. But what crowns the ſimplicity of our Apologiſt is, his laying ſuch ſtreſs upon the inconſiſtency of inſerting the Athenaſian Creed in our liturgy, when it makes holding the Catholic faith the ground-work of ſalvation, by denouncing everlaſting perdition againſt thoſe who do not; as if *Catholic faith*, here mentioned, beſides the belief of the Trinity, implied that of all the articles of Pope Pius's creed; and, of courſe, that none but ſubſcribers thereto ſhould be deemed Catholics, or worthy of heaven: whereas, in his own form of an oath of allegiance, by adding *Roman* to *Catholic*, in pointing at the Papiſts' church, he tacitly acknowledges, there are ſome other beſides this juſtly bearing the

the epithet *Catholic:* Sure he, who would call a Papiſt *Catholic Chriſtian*, muſt ſuppoſe there are other Chriſtians beſides Papiſts: Or is it not for diſtinction ſake, that additions are made to names? If he meant to exclude the Proteſtant church from the denomination of *Catholic*, he ſhould either have tacked *pretended* thereto, as it is to *reformed* in France, or ſimply have applied it to the popiſh, without the addition of *Roman*.

V. Moreover, how ſilly muſt it not be to appropriate that title to his church, ſo as to build an argument thereupon, without firſt ſhewing ſhe beats the Proteſtant, either as to extenſion or orthodoxy? Nor indeed do I fancy Non-conformiſts could have excepted to this creed, for the ſake of this expreſſion, but of the impenetrable myſtery of three being in one, and one in three, of any thing proceeding from another, without being made, created, or begotten thereby, &c.

VI. He ſays, Rome teaches, but does not eſtabliſh, as an article of faith, that it is good and profitable to beg the interceſſion of ſaints; and yet the council of Trent anathematizes ſuch, as teach otherwiſe (Seſſ. 25. decr. de inv. SS.). To pay his court to Non-conformiſts, or rather to indulge a recriminating vein, he inveighs againſt the ſacramental teſt, as horridly abuſive; not conſidering that, by the ſame argument, we ſhould diſcard all oaths, as expoſing ſuch as take them to prophane, nay blaſpheme the ſacred name they ſwear by, through prevarication and perjury. By theſe ſamples we may gueſs how ill qualified this gentleman has been for the office of apologiſt, and with what effrontery he would impoſe upon the underſtandings of Proteſtants, who, unluckily for him, know the doctrine of his church better than

than himſelf, and can never be duped by ſuch a gull. Or could he really imagine it is qualification enough for entering the controvertial liſts, that he has a tolerable knack of the Engliſh idiom?

But be what I have hitherto ſaid reſpecting theſe doughty champions of Popery, done in deference to its more learned votaries, who therefore, as more converſant in their own tenets, and way of argument, are hereby intreated to ſignify, if theſe performers expreſs their ſenſe of things, or if officiouſly, or catchpenny wiſe going to work uncommiſſioned, they have often miſtaken the point.

VII. Two things, which, I fancy, will be agreed to on all hands not to be much to their honour, or benefit of their cauſe, are, firſt, that inſtead of clearing this after the example of Chriſtian apologiſts, of the corruptions it is loaded withal, they rake together all the dirt they can to beſpatter proteſtancy. Sure it muſt be allowed a prepoſterous way of defence to attack another: Or may Proteſtants not be wrong, and yet Papiſts not right? Or may the Greeks, for example, who equally condemn both, not be the only genuine Chriſtians in the whole world?

2dly. That they endeavour all they can to make it believed the Methodiſts and Diſſenters are the *primum mobile* of the ſufferings of Papiſts; whereas, a ſimilarity of hardſhips, more or leſs complained of on both ſides, ſhould rather be an indication of their being, like birds of a feather, friendly affected to them. It is true, that ſhewing their zeal againſt ſuch, whoſe treatment they may jealouſly think too mild, compared to their own, may poſſibly outbalance every other good-

na-

natured conſideration: but this is not near ſo likely as, that theſe cowardly champions, not daring to ſpeak reproachfully of thoſe in power, meanſpiritedly would vent their ſpleen upon ſuch as they know can only retaliate in words.

VIII. Senſible with what a jealous eye the eſtabliſhed clergy look upon W – tfi—l—s, for proſelyting away their audience in ſuch numbers, that our churches, compared to the tabernacle, daily grow remarkably thin, and that, by the indefatigable zeal of theſe late ſectaries, for reclaiming ſinners from their vicious courſes, with ſeemingly no other view, than to the welfare of ſociety, and ſhip-wrecking ſouls. Senſible, I ſay, of this, they would, in good popiſh politics, tickle and pay their court to the party they apprehend more countenanced by magiſtracy; not that they wiſh better to the one than to the other, but, by another ſtroke of their policy, would make a diverſion in their own favour, which, however groſs bait, there are gudgeons enough to catch at, to the great detriment of the common cauſe, by dividing the Proteſtant intereſt, the only miſchief they can do: Our church dogmas and diſcipline being confeſſedly proof againſt all their machinations, they artfully belaboured a more practicable point.

LIBERTY.

LETTER L.

HENCE we may judge, that no miſchief, but rather much honour, would accrue to the Proteſtant cauſe, from granting Papiſts the liberty of argument; were it only, as was already obſerved, to ſtop their clamour againſt us for this interdiction, which they pretend, with ſome plauſibility, to ſpring from the diffidence we have of our cauſe; beſides its being more agreeable to the ſpirit of our church, whoſe 66th canon orders preaching miniſters, or, in default thereof, the biſhops themſelves diligently to labour in reclaiming the popiſh recuſants of their reſpective diſtricts from their errors, and that, by inſtruction, perſuaſion, and all good means they can deviſe, whereof one muſt ſure be argument, whoſe uſe ſhould, of conſequence, in all equity, be allowed theſe, contrary to the opinion of modern newspaper eſſayiſts, who wonder they could have the audacity, or the government the lenity to ſuffer their putting pen to paper, whereof the above humorous, but truly ſenſible *Areopagite* gives the following deſcription; "There are bigots, ſays he, both in religion and politics, who hate all manner of mooting in news-papers on thoſe ſubjects, and who would not be ſorry that the tools of their own party were ſent to Bedlam, to the King's Bench, or Bridewell, provided their opponents might be ſent with them. I am acquainted with many of theſe ſtaunch Iſachars, who think the myſteries in church and ſtate ſhould be as ſa-

cred, and as religiouſly kept behind the veil at the Cockpit, and in the Chapter-houſe, as in the Vatican, at Rome, or in the Holy Office, at Madrid." And again; "I often, ſays he, meet with lamentations and remonſtrances from the *jure divinos*, and the ſmaller fry of levee men, how much the church and ſtate are endangered by admitting ſuch heretics and republicans to an hearing in the common news-papers: but felicitate my country on the acceſſion of ſo valuable a privilege, as making them the vehicles of mens' private thoughts to the public, to the great advantage of liberty, and the religious rights of Chriſtians and Proteſtants."

This reſtraint will appear the more ſtrange, when, it is well known, Quadratus, Ariſtides, and Juſtin, have ventured to put pen to paper in defence of chriſtianity, nay, and perhaps with impunity, in perſon preſented the pagan emperors with their apologies. Sure as much lenity may be expected at the hands of a Proteſtant as a Pagan magiſtrate, eſpecially as this needs be under no apprehenſion, that the cauſe of popery will ever prevail in the hands of its paltry advocates.

II. And, indeed, Proteſtant polemical abilities muſt be much impaired, or the popiſh vaſtly improved ſince the laſt century, to dread any diſgraceful conſequence from our divines entering the liſts with the popiſh, upon any tolerable footing; for, beſides other examples I could produce, in 1622, Biſhop Laud held a conference with Fiſher the Jeſuit, before the Marquiſs of Buckingham and his mother, and ſo foiled his adverſary, that theſe illuſtrious perſonages were both confirmed in the Proteſtant religion, wherein they were then wavering. The year following the Primate of Ireland, Bramhal, when but a ſtripling in controverſy, had the like ſucceſs in a diſpute he was provoked

voked to by a Jeſuit and Secular prieſt in Yorkſhire. The impreſſion made by the conference of the famous Peter Martyr, upon the incomparable Bernard Gilpin, notwithſtanding his almoſt inſuperable prejudice of education, is remarkable.

III. In 1687, Patrick Tirall, being made titular Biſhop of Clogher, in Ireland, had the revenues aſſigned him by King James the 2d. upon which he fixed a convent of friars in Manachan, where he held a public viſitation of his clergy, and had the aſſurance to challenge the Proteſtant clergy to a public diſputation. Mr. Charles Leſly undertook the taſk, which he performed to the confuſion of the papiſts. He afterwards held another diſputation with a celebrated popiſh divine, in the church of Tynan, in the dioceſe of Armagh, before a numerous aſſembly of both religions, the iſſue of which was, that Mr. John Stewart, a popiſh gentleman, ſolemnly abjured the errors of Rome. In 1686, Biſhop Patrick and Dr. Jane, had a conference with two Romiſh prieſts, in preſence of King James, who was deſirous of bringing over Laurence Hyde, Earl of Rocheſter, to popery, but it only ſerved to confirm him in his old principles, and, as Biſhop Kennet relates, his majeſty was heard to ſay, "he never ſaw a bad cauſe ſo well, nor a good one ſo ill maintained;" whereas I am apt to think, as has been already hinted, the converſions made by popiſh diſcourſes, are more owing to the wavering ſtate of proteſtancy, the miſrepreſentations made of popery, the proſecution of its votaries, or ſuch like unavailing motives, than any force of fair argument. Nor can I be convinced, but that, at this day, there may be Lauds, Leſleys, &c. enough, to overmatch their popiſh antagoniſts at the quill, much more ſo at the tongue,

gue, were it adviſable to put the iſſue to this envenomed weapon, which in altercations is ſcarce ever brandiſhed with any degree of temper or decorum.

IV. A very ſenſible writer obſerves, " that every man naturally hates to be accounted a fool, or a liar, and therefore, when worſted by the force of arguments, which may be to him unanſwerable, though not convincing, he falls into heat and paſſion, which the other returning with equal warmth, at length both loſe the queſtion, and often fall from words to blows, though, after all, the contention may moſt commonly be only about words;" which proves this method of adjuſting matters unadviſable. We rarely, if ever, find ſuch a command of temper as Melancton was poſſeſſed of; upbraided by Eccius with the diſgrace of requiring till the morrow to anſwer one of his querks; like an honeſt man he humbly replied, " my good doctor, I am not ſeeking my own glory in this affair, but the truth."

V. Indeed, I am aware that a better defence of the toleration of papiſts could be made, than either of theſe champions, of whoſe ſlender abilities, from my averſion to a general cenſure, I have given ſome examples, have done, viz. that none of theſe miſchievous practical principles, affixed upon Rome, have ever been pronounced *ex catedra*, and of courſe, could be puniſhable in, or charged but upon ſuch as expreſsly adopt them. The reaſon of the diſtinction is, that no one ſhould in juſtice be made liable to the guilt of another, whereas what comes from the roſtrum is deſervedly fathered upon every member of the community, unleſs they ſhould expreſsly diſavow the ſame: But then they would ceaſe to belong thereto, as the pronouncing of one ſingle point puts them

them as much out of the verge thereof, as had they abjured the whole. Are we not to make a difference between an Engliſh army, whereof one only regiment, in the late war, is ſaid to have refuſed to give quarter, and the Knights of Malta, whoſe profeſſion, to a man, it is ſaid to be, neither to give nor take? Now here is a paralel caſe, there being no law or tenet unalterably binding papiſts but what is dogmatical; and really to me the difference betwixt a man, vicious from principle, and one that is accidentally ſo, is the ſame as that betwixt an unmuzzled bear and dog. Should the caſe be otherwiſe, let our own brethren look to it; have they not, when in power, been all of them intolerant in their turns, not only to the common foe, but even to each other? Under Queen Elizabeth and James the 1ſt, were Whitgift and Laud not as averſe to diſſenting teachers, and theſe under Cromwell, to thoſe of the eſtabliſhed church, as Bonner or Gardiner have been to both under Queen Mary? Yet who will ſay this was the reſult of the true ſpirit of proteſtancy, and not rather the tranſport of blind and intemperate, but perſonally religious zeal, if not political fury? Why then ſhould the caſe be otherwiſe with Papiſts? or, if principle be at the bottom on both ſides, why ſhould they not be tolerated as well as Diſſenters? For it does not appear, a blood-thirſty perſecuting ſpirit, or even diſloyalty, pleads any more againſt the one than the other. Do their advocates not gratefully, and with juſtice, acknowledge the goodneſs of providence, in ſuffering the Act of Settlement to take place, ſince when, papiſts, comparatively ſpeaking, ſecurely ſit, each one under his own, however ſcanty, and dear-bought fig-tree and vine.

VI. Had our famous Locke but adverted to this diſtinction, he had never been ſo ſanguine in the proſcription of papiſts, by excepting them from his general plan of toleration, as he has done the atheiſts. Pity it is, ſuch a genius, while his hands were in, did not go thoro'-ſtitch with this important affair, by ſhewing theſe poſitions, "faith is not to be kept with heretics, kings excommunicated forfeit their crowns, the allegiance of their ſubjects, &c." And the like are held by Papiſts as dogmatical tenets, or defined *ex catedra*, or only temporary expedients, for the advancement of a favourite cauſe, by ſhewing: I ſay, they were held any more dogmatical than this, "dominion is founded in grace" was ſo by ſome Reformers, and that the diſtinction between church and ſtate, ſpiritual and temporal, is ſo ridiculous, that a Mahometan could not be a faithful ſubject to a Chriſtian Prince, whilſt he yielded implicit obedience to his Mufti at Conſtantinople, as to his religious principles. Theſe being the main hinges upon which the whole controverſy turned, the overſight was the leſs excuſable, and that of ſo obvious a deſtinction as is betwixt religious and ſecular things, quite culpable, as in the courſe of his letter, eſpecially by the following words, concerning the duty of toleration in churchmen, "whoſe authority, ſays he, ſhould be confined within the bounds of the church, nor can it in any manner be extended to civil affairs, becauſe the church itſelf is a thing abſolutely ſeparate and diſtinct from the commonwealth. The boundaries on both ſides are fixed and immovable, he jumbles heaven and earth together, the things moſt remote and oppoſite, who mixes theſe ſocieties, which are in their original, end and buſineſs, and in every thing, perfectly diſtinct

tinct, and infinitely different from each other;" eſpecially, I ſay, as he frequently mentions the difference betwixt ſpeculative and practical opinions, by which are meant no other than religious and temporal, ſo as to ſubmit the one, not the other, to the cognizance and correction of the civil magiſtrate: Why, therefore, not the one to the Mufti, and the other to the Chriſtian potentate?

LIBERTY.

LETTER LI.

1. IN ſhort, to approve himſelf to the world impartial herein, Mr. Locke ſhould have, at leaſt, endeavoured to put ſome points Papiſts diſagree with him in, beyond all doubt. For inſtance, 1ſt. That there are more ways to heaven than one. 2dly. That a church is a voluntary aſſociation, which, as people may freely enter into, ſo may they deſert it, upon fancying to find any error in its doctrine, or incongruity in its worſhip. 3dly. That one church ſhould be no guide or rule to another, &c. he had much better had abided by the tendency compulſion in religion has to hypocriſy, and its inutility towards forcing the mind to a compliance, than advanced ſuch *gratis dictums*, without which the duty of toleration might be equally eſtabliſhed. He could not be ignorant, that againſt the truth and ſufficiency of ſuch tenets, papiſts would not fail to object, that Chriſt's errand upon earth muſt have been idle, as people have enjoyed thoſe privileges as well before as ſince, and that the eſtabliſhed church might poſſibly join them againſt all three: againſt the firſt;

unleſs we could reconcile contradictions, ſuch as, for inſtance, *this is my real body, and this is not my real body; it is, and it is not idolatry to kneel at the ſacrament, &c.* and ſend to heaven a willful aſſertor of a falſity in religion. We have already ſeen this cannot be a matter of indifference, if but one of the parties hold it to be capital, which is the caſe here, eſpecially with Papiſts; nor indeed ſhould it ſeem to be otherwiſe than fundamental, when the queſtion is, whether Chriſt told a lie or not, and that it is reckoned a-kin to treaſon to give the lie to his majeſty: Beſides, not to mention the Athanaſian creed, and the 18th article of religion, which are expreſſed herein, is it likely people would fall out ſo woefully as they do upon this ſcore, were it of no moment? This, I ſcarce believe, Mr. Locke can otherwiſe account for, than by attributing it to either the believed importance of what is in debate, or the deſire of centering all emoluments, both civil and religious, within one ſect, excluſive of all others, without, perhaps, any other more laudable incentive than party ſpirit, ſelfiſhneſs, or ſordid avarice, which plea will give as fair a handle againſt the teſts directed to be taken by popiſh recuſants, as by Nonconformiſts.

II. Againſt the 2d. As it is not at all likely ſhe would have her epiſcopal church-government derived from the capricious choice of the people; but rather made to deſcend lineally from the apoſtles. But how ſhe would trace this pedigree, I ſhall not take upon me, nor is it to my preſent purpoſe to examine: Sure I am, however, that, be the manner what it may, it cannot be more precarious than Mr. Locke's, who would have the true church founded on theſe words of Chriſt; *whereſoever two or three are gathered together in my name,*

name, I will be in the midſt of them, (*Mat.* xviii. 20. For, the uncertainty of who with ſincerity aſſemble in Chriſt's name, and of courſe, which is the true church, being as great, as who with uprightneſs cry to him, *Lord, Lord*, (*Mat.* vii. 2.) there might as well be none, which republican plan ſeems to be his view, from the liberty he grants of aſſociating where one liſts, and anſwering it to his own conſcience.

III. Againſt the 3d. For I don't ſee any tolerable plea he offers in defence of the independence of one church upon another in ſpirituals. That he makes uſe of is built upon a ſuppoſition, that the tranſacting of people's temporal and domeſtic affairs is ſubject to no controul from law, which happens to be falſe: To uſe ſome of his own examples; if I may marry my daughter, which ſeems to be in every one's own choice, muſt this not be done according to what is preſcribed by the late Marriage Act? May a perſon ſince the Mort-main Act, by will, or deed of gift, diſpoſe of his worldly ſubſtance for ſuperſtitious uſes, to the impoveriſhing his own offſpring? Does his inſinuation of no body concerning himſelf with how a perſon conſumes his fortune in taverns, to the ruin of his family, impairing his health, and endangering his life, whilſt a great uproar is made upon his not reſorting to the eſtabliſhed place of worſhip, not getting his babe dipped in the accuſtomed manner, nor initiated in the uſual myſteries; does this, I ſay, not ſhew his circle of acquaintance has been unfriendly, unneighbourly, and uncharitable, if remiſs in admoniſhment on ſo important an occaſion? His maintaining ſuch, and others I could name, oracle like, unſupported by any proof, was therefore leaving the matter ſhort, and expoſing him-

himſelf to be thought more deſervedly famed for political or philoſophical, than religious abilities, inſomuch that herein, barring ſome humorous expreſſions and ſallies of wit, he was, if I miſtake not, below the level of many of his cotemporaries; what Dean Swift, in a letter to Mr. Pope, foretold of Lord Bolingbroke; "when he writes of any thing in this world, he is more than mortal, but will be a very trifler, ſhould he turn divine," may, in ſome degree be applicable here. He laid himſelf open to the cenſure of having ſuffered himſelf to be borne down by the times, without making a ſingle effort to put fellow Chriſtians, at leaſt upon a level with Heathens, Jews, and Mahometans, which, I fancy, might be eaſily done by means of the above obvious diſtinction, ſufficient to exculpate the body, tho' perhaps not all its individuals.

IV. There are great allowances to be made for a long and ſucceſsful poſſeſſion of even the moſt tyrannical uſurpation and ſway, ſuch as Popery bore. We read of many ſtruggles Jews made ſince their reduction by Titus, for recovering their beloved and once renowned Jury: Although we don't find it made any part of their creed, that they ſhould be ever again independent. The ring-leaders of theſe inſurrections might, indeed, have inculcated the thing; but, ſure I am, if ever it was the ſenſe of the nation, it muſt be long ſince vaniſhed. Thus it might be with Papiſts; they might be ſpirited on by incendiaries, ſuch as Allen, Parſons, Campion, &c. are repreſented, upon turbulent principles, which never made part of their creed, and of whoſe pernicious tendency they ſeem, from their long peaceable comportment, to be fully convinced; notwithſtanding all the ſophiſtry uſed to varniſh them over.

V. The

V. The imperial laws, for inſtance, franchiſes the bond-ſlave on the hereſy of his lord, and emancipates the child, on that of his parent; nay, the wife converted, is ſuppoſed diſengaged from her infidel huſband by St. Paul (1 Cor. vii. 12.), why therefore, ſay they, ſhould the ſubject not be ſo from his allegiance, on the hereſy of his ſovereign? Theſe reaſons, taken out of Cardinal Allen's works, grounded the indictment of Thomas Alfield, in Queen Elizabeth's reign. But the queſtion is, if theſe imperial laws, and others of the kind, had better never to have been enacted? Or if, from Paul's adviſing, in his own, not the Lord's name, not to put away the infidel, if he chuſe to ſtay, it is fair to infer, the Lord has ſet the converted party at liberty from the matrimonial tie? and not rather, that he has determined nothing herein, as he had (v. 10.) when both are converted, where a ſeparation is not allowed (Mat. v. 32.)? Or ſuppoſing the Lord has granted the privilege to the converts from infidelity, does it follow, it ſhould be extended, contrary to the univerſal practice, to thoſe from what we call hereſy? or is an exemption from allegiance, a conſequence of that from the conjugal duty, when one is of a private, the other of a public nature, apt to be attended with the overthrow of a whole nation? If, therefore, Jews are tolerated in all the Sultan's dominions, not excepting Paleſtine, why may not Papiſts here? Or if there has been ſuch a vaſt change in the diſpoſition of the former, ſince the reigns of Trajan and Adrian, when they were totally baniſhed, and it was made death for them to return again, as to give the Ottoman empire no umbrage at this day, why may there not be as much

much in that of the latter, ſince the Reformation has gained the aſcendant in theſe realms?

VI. There are indeed, amongſt the Turks ſome, who, from a report propagated of their ſlaughtering a Chriſtian ſlave on Good-Friday, in ridicule, or approbation of Chriſt's crucifixion, which the Alcoran holds as only apparent, will ſuffer no Jews: And this ſeems to be the caſe here, when the government might probably be tolerant, could the people but diveſt themſelves of their, perhaps, as ill-grounded prejudices, which ſhould be the taſk of churchmen to effect, according to Mr. Locke, in the following words, which, for their lenity, I thought proper to tranſcribe; "It is not enough, ſays he, that eccleſiaſtical men abſtain from violence, rapine, and all manner of perſecution: He that pretends to be a ſucceſſor of the apoſtles, and takes upon him the office of teaching, is obliged alſo to admoniſh his hearers of the duty of peace and good will towards all men, as well the erroneous as the orthodox, as well thoſe that differ from him in faith and worſhip, as agree with him therein; he ought induſtriouſly to exhort all men, whether private perſons, or magiſtrates, to charity, meekneſs, and toleration, and diligently endeavour to allay and temper all the heat and unreaſonable averſeneſs of mind, which, either any man's fierce zeal for his own ſect, or the craft of others, has kindled againſt Diſſenters. I will not undertake to repreſent how happy would be the fruit, both in church and ſtate, if the pulpits every where ſounded with the doctrine of peace and toleration, leſt I ſhould ſeem to reflect upon thoſe men, whoſe dignity I deſire not to detract from, nor would have diminiſhed, either by others, or themſelves. I only ſay, thus it ought to be, and if

any

any one, profeſſing himſelf a preacher of the goſpel of peace, teach otherwiſe, he either underſtands not, or neglects the buſineſs of his calling, and ſhall one day give an account thereof to the Prince of Peace. This temper he certainly ought to uſe towards thoſe, who mind only their own buſineſs, and are ſolicitous for nothing, but that they may worſhip God in that manner, which they are perſuaded is acceptable to him, and in which they have the ſtrongeſt hopes of eternal ſalvation;" which words are ſtrong innuendos, if not of churchmen often breathing a ſanguinary ſpirit, at leaſt of their remiſſneſs in repreſſing it in others, by removing ill-grounded impreſſions: nay, at the cloſe of his letter he does not mince the matter.

LIBERTY.

LETTER LII.

1. BUT ſhould my above diſtinction be groundleſs, it muſt be owned, that, upon uncertainties, and here can be no other, it is more commendable to exceed in acts of benevolence than ſeverity; and I flatter myſelf, 'tis this conſideration more than any attachment, or biaſs to any branch of chriſtianity whatſoever, that induces me to differ with Mr. Locke in this particular. I muſt own, it ſeems to me Rome has adopted theſe and other principles, deſtructive to ſociety, not as articles of belief, but as points of

diſ-

diſcipline, for preſerving the pretended purity of her faith: For who could imagine that it was her faith that put Queen Mary, for inſtance, upon her inhuman treatment of her ſiſter, Lady Elizabeth? upon admitting a council, for taking up and burning her father's body? Upon her moſt ungrateful and perfidious breach of promiſe with the Suffolk men? Upon her ungenerous and barbarous treatment of Judge Hales, who had ſtrenuouſly defended her right of ſucceſſion to the crown? And, above all, of Archbiſhop Cranmer, who in reality had ſaved her life, if credit may be given to Biſhop Burnet in the following paſſage, where he ſays, "That her firm adherence to her mother's cauſe and intereſt, and her backwardneſs in ſubmitting to the king, her father, were thought crimes of ſuch a nature by his majeſty, that he came to a reſolution to put her openly to death, and that, when all others were unwilling to run any riſk in ſaving her, Cranmer alone ventured upon it. In his gentle way, he told the king, that ſhe was young and indiſcreet, and therefore it was no wonder if ſhe obſtinately adhered to that, which her mother and all about her had been infuſing into her for many years, but that it would appear ſtrange if he ſhould, for this cauſe, ſo far forget the father as to proceed to extremities with his own child; that if ſhe were ſeparated from her mother, and her people, in a little time there might be ground gained on her; but that to take away her life would raiſe horror through all Europe againſt him." By which means he preſerved her.

II. Who could imagine the cruelties ſaid to be committed by the Poliſh confederates, which, but never ſo little, humanized ſavages would abhor, are

are the conſequence of any point of their creed? Or may we not as well throw the exceſſes and outrages of Chriſtians upon the goſpel? In whatever manner Rome has adopted ſuch unnatural principles, I believe it muſt be owned on all hands, they muſt be diſproved by her votaries before they can pretend to any degree of toleration in this Proteſtant ſtate. By their diſavowal thereof, if dogmatical, they would as effectually renounce her communion, as ſhould they ſubſcribe to the ſupremacy or teſt: This they would by no means do, as appears by the obſtinacy of their refuſal herein: Therefore, by their offering to take the oath of allegiance, or any other, compatible with their theoretical creeds, which would overthrow all apprehenſions of thoſe miſchievous principles, they look upon theſe as mere matter of diſcipline, whoſe infringers do not for that alone break looſe from the pale, nor even the common bonds of charity, if they have but a reaſonable plea in their behalf.

III. Why this offer is not accepted is a matter of amazement to me. Should it be ſaid, there is no believing their oaths; does the author of the Confeſſional not give a fair opportunity of retaliating the charge, and boldly advancing, that this is judging by our own churchmen, who, as was already obſerved, ſubſcribe to articles, whereof they diſbelieve the truth. And ſhould it be ſaid, by way of difference, that Papiſts hold oaths, taken to heretics, not binding, or diſpenſible by the pope; what could hinder their recriminating thus? The Proteſtant clergy, by their conduct, give likewiſe room to think, they make light of perjury, when it ſtands in their way to preferment. Nor do I ſee any thing can be here urged, that is not liable to the ſame retortion; ſo that the

the oaths of Papiſts muſt, in all conſiſtence, be relied on, or thoſe of ſome beneficed clergy not; or if the charge againſt theſe be held calumnious, common juſtice requires as much ſhould be ſaid of the inſincerity of popiſh oaths.

IV. And this, by the way, may ſuffice to ſhew, this work is ill timed, and rather conduces to quicken, than, what its author pretends to have in view (page 14.), ſtem the impetuous tide of popery, by giving the faireſt handle to its votaries, of twitting their adverſaries in the teeth with one of the moſt miſchievous principles thrown into their own diſh, in conſequence of which their moſt ſolemnly ſworn faith were not to be credited. Nor can I ſee any real ſervice it has done the cauſe, unleſs it ſhould be reckoned ſuch to run down our national church, by ſpreading the alarm for the indifference with which ſhe looks upon the preſent palpable and univerſally complained of growth of Popery, to charge her with uſing popiſh arguments, in maintaining her prerogative and right of exacting ſubſcriptions, and her divines, with recurring to the moſt abandoned caſuiſtry for exculpating the ſame; and, in fine, barely to enumerate ſome deſtructive tenets fathered on Papiſts, without as much as once mentioning any of the pleas, he muſt have known made uſe of within theſe three years, in their defence or extenuation. He aſks, for example, if Papiſts acquit Proteſtants of hereſy? If not, if they think them fit to be tolerated, kept faith with, if their princes may be excommunicated, depoſed, and murdered, &c.? yet very diſingenuouſly ſays not a word of the ſolution given theſe queries.

V. If this be patroniſing a cauſe, I muſt own myſelf a ſtranger to what its traitorous proſtitu-

tion

tion can be; to me it looks, and I fancy it muſt ſo to every impartial eye, like ſowing diſcord, and creating jealouſy amongſt the allied troops of an army, in the day of battle. In ſhort, he has had, and is like to have as little ſucceſs in regard to what he profeſſes to have, had in his eye, as the aforeſaid Apologiſt, who, conjuror like, would pretend to reconcile religious parties, without any tolerable tincture of theology, or being at all maſter of what is in debate.

LIBERTY.

LETTER LIII.

I. BUT what appears amazingly incoherent, and to the laſt degree ſelfiſh is, that this gentleman and brethren, however loud in their cries againſt the narrowneſs of the preſent tolerating bounds, when pleading for themſelves, are much more ſo againſt their extention, when the queſtion is about Papiſts, whom they would not have ſuffered in a Proteſtant community but for a moment, ſo ſuſpicious to them are their dealings with its members, and loyalty to its chief. But, however inclined I ſhould be to diſcountenance ſuch dangerous inmates as they are thought to be, I muſt own, whatever it may be with their private dealings, which I ſubmit to the commercial part of the nation, I have more than one reaſon to think well of their loyalty. From what they expreſs on ſundry occaſions, it ſeems to me, they have more ſatisfactory enjoyment of their

few remaining, or rather winked at civil and religious rights, ſince the year 1714, than they had from 1603 until then. Moreover, the major part of them, of any property, have their chief dependance in the public funds, which, it is more than probable, would fall with the preſent eſtabliſhment, to which, of courſe, they muſt, according to the maxim of the Goſpel, "Where your treaſure is, there alſo will be your heart" (Mat. vi. 20.), be better affected: whereas I can ſee but one conjecture, whereupon to build their diſaffection, namely, their not praying for the royal family in their religious meetings, which after all, may be more owing to the malignancy of the times, conſtruing it into hypocriſy, than to any diſloyalty.

Should this, as I apprehend, be the caſe, it ſavours but little of the ſpirit of Chriſt, who was ever known to do what he thought right, notwithſtanding the obloquy of a cenſorious world. Now, that the ſucceſs and proſperity of the royal family, notwithſtanding their being of a different religious opinion, are to be looked upon in this light, ſo as to be deſervedly prayed for by Papiſts, appears from hence, that in parallel caſes, we have many examples thereof in the Old and New Law.

II. Have the Jews that remained in captivity at Babylon, not wrote to their releaſed brethren at Jeruſalem, to offer ſacrifice, and pray for the long life and proſperity of Nabuchadnezar, and his ſon Balthazar (Paral. i. 11.)? Does Darius not ſuppoſe the thing at leaſt juſtifiable, when he orders his officers in Judea to furniſh every neceſſary for the ſacrifices, that he and family may be prayed for (1 Eſd. vi. 10.)? Have the Jews at Jeruſalem not aſſured the Lacedemonians, that they

were

were conſtant in their prayers for them (1 Mac. xii. 21.)? Does Chriſt not order tribute to be paid to Cæſar (Mat. xxii. 21.)? And St. Paul, that every ſoul ſhould be ſubject to the higher powers (Rom. xiii. 1.)? Why then may they not as well be prayed for? If I am in duty bound to ſupport government, by paying the tax, why not by offering my prayers for the purpoſe? A mercenary world being more tenacious of their purſes than prayers, might have made it needleſs to inculcate the neceſſity of tendering theſe, every one being inclined that way. Was this not the practice with primitive Chriſtians? And was it not for wiping off the contrary aſperſion, that Tertullian, in his 3d Apology, about the end of the ſecond century, declared it the bounden duty of all men, and Chriſtians more eſpecially, to pray for their prince?

Should Papiſts therefore complain of any hard meaſure given them upon the ſcore of not diſcharging this duty, they muſt blame themſelves. Their refuſal of taking any teſt, inconſiſtent with their creed, muſt, in the eyes of every patron to the rights of private judgment, be to their honour: What dependance could be had upon that of ſuch as would betray their own conſciences? But this, as we have ſeen, is far from being the caſe here.

III. Beſides others' miſinterpretation of their prayers, I fancy their own miſapprehenſion of things ſtands in their light herein: imagining their cauſe to be that of God, and, of courſe, inconteſtibly good, they think every means of promoting it juſtifiable, without conſidering, that in many ſuch they ſhould have been authoriſed by his own expreſs command. In this, however they had the example ſet them by Rome, which, beſides coer-

cive methods, too many to be here enumerated, has interdicted all commerce in ſpirituals with ſuch as ſhe has retrenched, whence they might have unadviſably inferred the unwarrantableneſs, as well of praying for, as with them. Theſe ſteps taken *ad terrorem*, were thought ſo naturally productive of the ſalutary end of reducing the outlawed to reaſon, that they were copied after by the eſtabliſhed church againſt Non-conformiſts, whereof the author of the Confeſſional ſo loudly complains.

IV. The miſtake ſeems to lie in this, that events are apt to be aſcribed, not to their real but apparent cauſes. It is generally imagined, that all ſeparatiſts are the only ſource of the miſchief; whereas, they may be but mere tools in the hands of providence, for the chaſtiſement of ſuch as they divided from, whoſe public or private exceſſes might be the true original ſpring. Who could have thought that God would have a hand in the defection of the ten Tribes, had the man of God, Shemeah, not declared it to be ſo (1 Kings, xii. 22.)? or, to paſs by many more inſtances, in Nabuchadnezar's enſlaving the whole nation, had God not ſignified by the mouth of his prophet, that this, however wicked king, was herein his faithful ſervant (Jer. xxvii. 6.)? Now, Jews having attributed theſe and other misfortunes befallen them to their manifold offences, muſt Chriſtians withſtand, perhaps, the decree of heaven, and expect an expreſs revelation, to profit by ſuch examples of exemplary humility, left, as it would ſeem, upon record for their imitation, by looking upon themſelves as the root of the evil? inſtead of attempting the reduction of others by might and main, in which, like Sedecias, the laſt king of the Jews, contrary

to

to the prophet's advice (Jer. xxxiv. 2.) they poſſibly may expoſe themſelves to fly in the face of God's ordinance, whereof, by a thorough acquieſcence in whatever is expected of them, agreeable to conſcience, and chearfully ſubmitting to their croſs, they run no manner of riſk; inſtead of this, I ſay, they ſhould turn their eyes towards a reformation at home, where, though there may be none of thoſe flagrant crimes, that cry for immediate vengeance, to be met with, yet it is more than probable, ſome of the clancular kind may, heinous enough, however ſecret, and perpetrated perhaps but by a few, to draw down the wrath of heaven upon the whole body; or was this not the caſe with Achon, the detection of whoſe ſeemingly not ſo grievous tranſgreſſion, could yet not have been made under a miracle (Joſh. vii. 19.)?

V. But no; all the fault being thrown upon the adverſe party, heaven and earth are moved for reclaiming them; the joint efforts of all deviſable means, both ſecular and religious, however condemnable upon other occaſions, are here held meritorious, nay obligatory. And what is the conſequence? An irreparable breach and everlaſting ſchiſm betwixt the members of the ſame community, for the healing of which it is therefore incumbent on Papiſts either to put up prayers for the royal family, and comply with every thing elſe required at their hands, for attaining ſo ſalutary a purpoſe, or, what they are here called upon to do, ſhew them to be irreconcilable to conſcience.

LIBERTY.

LETTER LIV.

I. AS it is with praying for, ſo do I think it to be with taking an oath of ſimple allegiance to his majeſty: Nor do I think any ſet of men, however ſcrupulouſly conſcientious, would offer the leaſt ſhadow of a plea in defence of their non-compliance herein, unleſs, perhaps, ſome nonjuring patrons of a viſionary *jus divinum*, which I cannot find make an article of the popiſh creed. But, as ſince the Reformation I find ſuch have been made of different tenours, under James I. William and Mary, and Queen Anne: I ſhould ſubmit it to the Public, if the following, deduced from the laid down principles, would not anſwer every purpoſe intended thereby:

"*I N. N. do ſincerely promiſe and ſwear, that I will be faithful, and bear true allegiance to his preſent Majeſty, King GEORGE the IIId. that I believe the Pope has no power or right to dethrone him, abſolve his ſubjects from their allegiance to him, or me from this my oath, and that I renounce any juriſdiction, power, ſuperiority, or pre-eminence, whether civil, or even eccleſiaſtical, he may claim within theſe realms, in virtue of any divine indefeaſible right, ſave only that of his being barely a teſt of my creed, or, which is all one, my being bound to be in communion with him, as to articles of faith neceſſary to ſalvation: So help me God.*"

II. Now I would be deſirous to know what exceptions either Proteſtants or Papiſts could have to this

this oath. To my thinking, it as effectually diſpels every reaſonable apprehenſion the former could have of Popiſh inſurrections, or the encroachments of Rome, as that framed the 1ſt of King William the IIId. and effectually implies every prerogative I find the Goſpel beſtows upon Popes, as pretended ſucceſſors of St. Peter, ſuch as their feeding the flock (John xxi. 16.); their being the rock upon which the church is built (Mat. xvi. 18.) and if any other there be of the kind; which may be all very naturally underſtood of preſerving untainted the ſacred depoſitum of the faith, whereby alone, ſhould every thing elſe fail, the church would, with as much, if not more, righteouſneſs, truly awful and reverential reſpect, though perhaps not in ſuch reſplendency, as to raiſe the jealouſy of worldlings, equally ſubſiſt. Nor do I fancy his holineſs could complain of the narrowneſs of the limits here ſet to his prerogative, without betraying an inclination to play over the old game, which has more than once very nigh brought his ſee to the brink of utter ruin, by ſtripping her almoſt to her very vitals.

III. And yet, ſtrange as the thing appears, it is what the late Pontiff ſeemed driving at, by his claim of a paramount authority over a certain ducal ſtate; though it is more than probable he found to his coſt, it were far better to abide by the moderate terms I preſcribe, of being tenacious but of dogms, contenting himſelf with expoſtulations, and letting go his hold in whatever relates not thereto, purſuant to the evangelical counſel; "If a man will ſue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have the cloak alſo (Mat. v. 40.) than move heaven and earth by threats and excommunications, to gain the poſſeſſion of what potentates may be void enough of

honour to diſpute or revoke the ceſſion, he pretends, made thereof to his ſee. So true is it, that, like the woman in travel (John xvi. 2.), when the good things of this life are in the caſe, no paſt miſcarriages are, through a kind of infatuation, a bar to our purſuits, and that, like the beaſts that periſh, we are inſenſible when in honour (Pſal. xlix. 20.). As to the preſent Pontiff, his moderation is reported to be ſuch, that he only claims a preſcriptive right, which he means to inforce but by intreaties.

IV. Had I the honour of his holineſs's ear, I ſhould take the ſame liberty of remonſtrating as Paul has done to the contentious Corinthians (1 Cor. vi. 1.), to leave the point in debate to reference, and not to be his own judge. I ſhould make bold to aſk, whether there are not ſome rights annexed to his ſee not indefeaſibly her's? And if ſo, why, as Paul adviſed (ver. 7.), ſuch ſhould not be given up for peace ſake, eſpecially as her caſe could not be much worſe for it than when in the hands of Peter and his immediate ſucceſſors? And, ſhould he plead the injuſtice of ſtripping her of what ſhe held time immemorial, or avail himſelf of his ſupreme authority being debaſed, by a ſubmiſſion to any worldly award, I would tell him, there may be ſuch a difference betwixt the time of imperial donations, when the ſovereignty of the beſt part of the known world centered in a few, and now, that royalty is ſo prodigiouſly branched out, as to make it warrantable to reſume thoſe old grants, for the ſupport of its extenſive dignity, and unreaſonable in the donee, after having enjoyed the ſweet fruits thereof for ſo long a ſeries of years, to cry out againſt their being withheld for ſuch valuable reaſons. And, infine, that the pontifical authority is, ſure, nothing, compared to

that

that of God, who yet did not think it beneath him to call upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem and Judea to judge betwixt him and his vineyard (Iſai. v. 3.).

V. Should he ſtill ſay, that, upon his inauguration, he pledged his faith for maintaining, to the utmoſt of his power, both the perſonal and real eccleſiaſtical rights and immunities; he might well expect to be told, that it ſounds ill, and ſavours much of ſelf, to find his ſanctity ſo laviſhly liberal of his diſpenſing power to others, for breaking through the moſt ſolemn engagements, and ſo ſparingly on't to himſelf, eſpecially when the temporal intereſt of Mother Church leads that way; which expoſes his privilege of binding and looſing, meant at moſt for the concern of ſouls, to the ſcoffs of infidelity, being viſibly at every turn made a cat's paw of for graſping earthly wealth and dominion.

VI. Should he, infine, peremptorily pretend my ſentiments erroneous herein, I ſhould moſt humbly beg to be ſet to rights in regard to the infallibility of his oracular deciſions reſpecting temporals, or even ſpirituals relating to diſcipline, and that, from the undoubted warrant of revelation, whence alone it could be derived, which, if done, I would readily exhort all ſovereignty to bend before him, and ſubmit to his yoke; otherwiſe, withſtand him to the face, becauſe he were as much to blame, if not more ſo, than his predeceſſor Peter was, when reprehended by St. Paul (Gal. ii. 11.).

VII. And, indeed, the diſtinction of ſpiritual and temporal, whether meant of the perſons or properties of eccleſiaſtics, is founded upon the conduct of Chriſt and his apoſtles. Did Chriſt not get the tribute paid for himſelf and Peter

(Mat.

(Mat. xvii. 26.)? Inſtead of claiming any exemption from the ſecular power, did Paul not appeal from Feſtus to Cæſar (Act xxv. 11.), which was tacitly acknowledging his juriſdiction? and not order, as we already obſerved, every ſoul, not excepting the clergy, to be ſubject to the higher powers (Rom. xiii. 1.)? Whereas, when in the functions of the miniſtry, or promoting the doctrine of the Goſpel, they had no reſpect of perſons. Did Chriſt, when before Pilate, inſtead of inſiſting, as he might, on his quality of king, not undauntedly ſay, "Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice" (John xviii. 37.)? Did Peter and John, in open defiance of the Jewiſh rulers, not declare, they could not warrant hearkening to them before God (Acts iv. 19.)? Did Paul not boldly call Elimas the child of the devil, for obſtructing the ways of the Lord (Acts xiii. 10.)?

VIII. As it is with ſpiritual and temporal, ſo is it with the diſtinction of the divine from the human prerogatives of popes, the one being ever held inviolably ſacred and inabdicable, but the other often intrenched upon, nay, for reaſonable cauſes given up; witneſs the pragmatic ſanction and concordates: And hence it is that his preſent holineſs ſeeks to put his broils in compromiſe, which could not take place in whatever is judged of divine right.

I know it is pretended, that, not only the ſpiritual, but even the temporal, implying, as the ſchools term it, an immunity, both perſonal and real, having been ever religiouſly obſerved by Jews, nay the very Pagans, muſt be of divine and natural right; inſomuch, that no earthly power can warrantably intrench thereupon, and that hence it is, Chriſt paid the above tribute,

not

not for any right Herod had thereto, but, as he expreſſes it, merely not to give ſcandal.

IX. I muſt own, that, previous to the Levitical Law (Numb. i. 49. and iii. 12.), I find the ſcripture atteſt the privilege to have been granted by the Heathens (Gen. xlvii. 22.), but were there not traces of image-worſhip, purgatory, polytheiſm, and idolatry, amongſt them in that early period? Muſt, therefore, theſe be reckoned the dictates of nature, and not rather the offspring of prieſt-craft and corruption? Nor do I ſee this Levitical obſervance ſhould now be held obligatory, any more than, as Chriſt ſays (Mat. x. 10.), that every workman is worthy of his hire; and, of courſe, what is over and above his ſubſiſtence, is taxable. And pray may the prieſthood, by engroſſing a great ſhare of the landed property, not otherwiſe reduce the ſtate to a low ebb? As to the goſpel claim of church exemption, beſides prieſtly ſelfiſhneſs and legal impunity, in flagrant caſes, being ever ſcandalous, did Chriſt's reaſon for it affect Peter and ſucceſſors? Were they lineally deſcended from, or the preſumptive heirs of David, or any other earthly prince, to enjoy the privilege like Chriſt?

X. But allowing all his holineſs's pleas unexceptionable, the regal and imperial donations irrevocable, and, of courſe, thoſe he contends with all in the wrong, do the rules of prudence direct to launch in his defence the vatican bolt? Or, would he do as much to a man, who, with a piſtol to his breaſt, demanded his purſe? Sure he has not reflected, that, from its having, perhaps indiſcerningly, been too often unſheathed, this weapon has no edge for making any other impreſſion than to provoke ridicule, diſdain or pity; and that, like the dog that loſt his bone by ſnapping

ping at its ſhadow, his predeceſſors have had the woeful experience by the decay of their ſway in the northern hemiſphere, how true the proverb is, "all graſp, all loſe."

XI. Concerning the adviſedneſs of yielding up another point, ſo much inſiſted upon by ſome reſpectable ſtates, I only ſay, no complaint of injuſtice could be made in the caſe, any more than in the caſe of his majeſty's diſmiſſing a miniſter of ſtate for his being obnoxious to the people, or ſuppreſſing the late ſecretaryſhip erected for American affairs, and annexing it to the other departments. Not to enter into the merits and neceſſity of that inſtitution for the well being of the church, which, in juſtice to truth, muſt be owned its generally acknowledged caſe, or grounds of its impeachment, the concealment whereof deſervedly makes the outcry as well of its foes as friends, ſure his holineſs ſhould pay as much deference to crowned heads as to the vulgar, upon whoſe, even malicious and ſpightful murmurs, he yet may conſent to the renunciation of a biſhop to his ſee (*c. niſi cum pridem.* 10. *de renun.*); though more cloſely connected withal, than any body, either politic or eccleſiaſtical is with the church.

XII. His holineſs muſt therefore agree, my oath of allegiance is allowable; and, I preſume, Proteſtants will ſubſcribe to its ſufficiency for having a toleration built thereupon: But by this I would be underſtood to mean no more than barely the free exerciſe of the Papiſts', the ſame as the Jews' religion, without any other hopes of their advancement to poſts of truſt, honour, or profit, or redreſs of their other grievances, than entirely lie in the breaſts of their governors. In ſhort, I could wiſh ſome act were paſſed, by way of trial, for putting them, as to liberty of worſhip, in that very

very ſituation, at which Non-conformiſts expreſs ſo much diſcontent and diſſatisfaction.

And now, having finiſhed my plan, I lay down my trowel, to wield the ſimeter alone in defence thereof, againſt all invaders: But ſhould it be made appear indefenſible, even this ſhall be ſo ſheathed, as never to be drawn again by me, unleſs to enter the liſts againſt popery, to which I have offered myſelf a proſelyte, in caſe of a thorough conviction of its being proved the genuine religion of Chriſt; and, ſhould I find any thing publiſhed in its behalf, againſt proteſtancy, to which I here make the ſame tender, for, whether from the weakneſs of its arguments, or my own heart's colloſity, perverſity, or obduracy, I am as yet a mere blank, a

Real Seeker.

To Mr. C—ke, Auguſt 25, 1769.

SIR,

HAVING received by the news-carrier one of your hand-bills of a plan for printing, by Royal Authority, in ſix-penny numbers, Mr. Matthew Taylor's *England's Bloody Tribunal*; I ſhould be glad to know if this be the ſame with that publiſhed two years ago? and if ſo, whether the author or you have ever peruſed the incloſed pages (See page 161.) ſent to Mr. P--d--n, for whom this Antidote againſt Popery was then advertiſed? and if not, whether, either in the body of the work, or, what I had much rather, in the Ledger, I may expect an anſwer to the queries therein contained? As this, in a great meaſure, may fix the unſettled thoughts of a

Real Seeker.

P. S.

P. S. You will give me leave, Sir, to trouble you with any further ſcruples that may occur in the courſe of this publication; as the learned author, inſtead of taking it amiſs, muſt in reaſon hold himſelf obliged to him, who would prevent his being guilty of ſo egregious a miſtake as reckoning without his hoſt, and put him in the way of ſo benevolent a turn, as laying the qualms of a diſtreſſed fellow-creature's conſcience.

Having no reaſon to expect the foregoing letter will ever be anſwered, its inſertion exhibits a freſh inſtance of Proteſtant diſingenuity.

FINIS.